















LATROBE VALLEY FIELD NATURALIST CLUB  
PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS AND EXCURSIONS 1974.

Feb. 22nd	Mr Alan Reid	Butterflies
Feb 23rd		Excursion with Mr Reid
March 22nd	Annual Meeting	Mallee Slides, J. Galbraith
March 23rd		Excursion to be decided
April 26th	Mr Graham Rowe	"Stratigraphy of South Gippsland"
May 4th	date altered to suit tides.	Excursion to Walkerville Cape Liptrap area. Leader Mr Rowe.
May 24th	Saw Millers Association	What they are doing for conservation ?
May 25th		Excursion with Saw Millers
June 28th	Mr Rex Filson	Lichens
June 29th		Excursion led by Mr Filson
July 26th	Mr J. Hyett	Reptiles
July 27th		Excursion to be decided
August 23rd	??	
August 24th		
September 27th	Brig. Officer	"Birds"
September 27th		Excursion led by Brig. Officer
October 25th	Mr J. Willis	"A Naturalist in the Arctic"
October 26th		Excursion led by MR Willis
November 22nd		
November 23rd		
December		Christmas get together to be arranged.

EXTRAS

March 14th.	Photoflora	Morwell Town Hall
April 21st	Picnic outing	Hazelwood Arboretum, with Horticultural Society.
October	Geelong	Weekend at suitable place to meet with members of Geelong F.N.C.

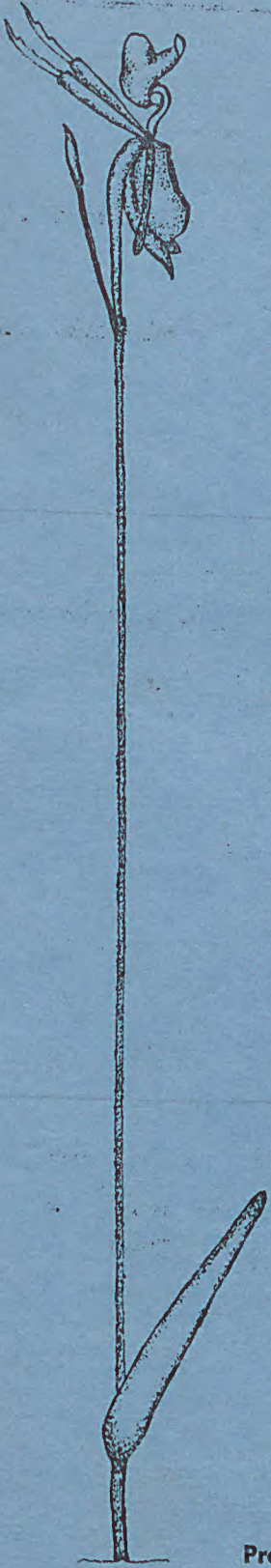






JANUARY 1974

ISSUE No. 121.



# *Latrobe Valley Naturalist*

Protect and enjoy

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Registered at the General Post Office Melbourne for transmission by Post as a Periodical Category B.



COMING EVENTS

Warragul F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday 18th January

Millers Factory, Sutton St Warragul.

Feature:

Members Travelogues

Excursion:

Sunday 20th January.

Meeting Place:

The "Bump" Junction of Powelltown Rd.  
and Big Creek Rd.

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Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday 18th January

Film Night "The Straitsman"

Excursion:

Joining Bairnsdale F.N.C. for Campout  
January 26, 27, 28.

More details in this issue.

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Sale F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday February 1st

Speaker:

Dr. Jenkin "Geology"

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Traralgon F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday 8th February

"Members Night"

Excursion:

Saturday 9th February Cape Paterson

Meeting Place:

Lyndon Gardens Leongatha 10.00am.

Leaders: Mr and Mrs Brewster.

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Dear Fellow Naturalists;

Greetings and best wishes for 1974 from Latrobe Valley Field Naturalists Club. The Index for 1973 is being compiled and should be ready for the February issue.

The Editor would like to thank the people who have helped with the Naturalist during 1973, especially those who provided material for printing.

Without articles from members we cannot successfully have a magazine. We look forward to the support of members in providing material for printing.

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#### NOTES FROM WARRAGUL F.N.C.

Mrs Brooks has sent details of the excursion to be held January 20th. Cars to meet at the "Bump" Junction as listed on front cover for the Nature Trail.

This walk has been prepared by the Forestry Commission. Arrangements will be made for several cars to wait at the western end to take the hikers back to the starting point.

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#### JANUARY CAMPOUT

We have received word from Mr Rogers regarding the Campout Weekend. The Campout will NOT be at Buckety Plains as formerly proposed, but will be at Anglers Rest camping park. That is where the Omeo Highway crosses the Cobungra River some 15 miles from Omeo.

Buckety Plains had no water, and there was no hut handy. The Anglers Rest Camping park is a good starting point for the Bogong High Plains 15 miles away on a good road - or anywhere else if people wish. Toilet facilities at the park. Charge for camping about \$1.00 per camp. Members attending the campout to make their own way there and meet others on arrival. A happy weekend to all attending.

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#### REPORT OF TRARALGON F.N.C BREAK- UP DECEMBER 1st

Many members enjoyed the barbecue and excursion to Stoney Creek. After meeting in Traralgon we travelled to Stoney Creek, then explored a winding road for several miles towards Seaton.

There were Clustered Everlastings and Blue Flax Lilies along the way. There were several stops to look at the flowers, one occasion to see a beautiful specimen of the Tall Sun Orchid, and also some Hyacinth Orchids.

A barbecue was held by the creek. It was quite hot by this time, and most of us were content to sit in the shade dabbling our feet in the peaceful stream. We did find a bank covered with Maidenhair fern by the creek.

Julie Chitty.



PINE FOREST PRODUCTIONAddress by Mr Michael Hall 23/11/73

Mr Hall has been associated with A.P.M. in the Latrobe Valley since 1950 and he feels the apparent conflict between Foresters and the community is less than most people realise. An overhead projector and a slide projector were used in conjunction to illustrate the talk. Mr Hall gave an outline of the Paper Industry in Australia dealing with the many mills and their products and then detailed A.P.M. establishments and production. Of the pulp production 44% is Australian, 32% recycled material and 24% imported, while with paper 68% is produced in Australia and 32% imported. Much of the imported paper is newsprint. Total employment at all pulp and paper mills in Australia is 10,000 males and 1200 females (1969/70). Maryvale employs 1,100 directly and 500 indirectly in forestry operations. The quantities of wood used per year at Maryvale is Eucalypt 123,000 tons and pine 79,000 tons.

Mr Hall then discussed the clearing of the forests on a face and showed slides of the Boola Boola area where land had been logged for chips since late 1940s. Most of the land had been logged in patches and has regenerated successfully. Silvertop (E. sieberi) regenerates well. It takes 35 to 40 years before the regrowth can be used again. The logging is restricted to several hundred acres in one year. Mr Hall stated that he hoped the public would come to accept the cleared acres, which were unsightly for about 5 years, as part of forestry. He also spoke briefly on Phytophthora cinnamomi, the Cinnamon Fungus.

Six ecological types of forests in the Gippsland area were discussed with the problems and advantages of each type. Where established pasture existed before pine planting twice the productivity resulted compared with plantings on forest cleared land. A Fellowship at the Botany School has been established at Melbourne University to study such problems. Slides of the Longford nursery showed the effort necessary to grow satisfactory seedlings.

Mr Hall discussed the mycorrhizal association of roots through the agency of soil-inhabiting fungus. The division of C.S.I.R.O. has found that the development of trees can be increased by introducing the correct strains of fungus and they are attempting to breed suitable fungi to associate with the different trees. The fungus infects the short lateral roots and receives carbohydrates from the plant while it also acts as the fine feeding system of the plant absorbing moisture and nutrients. In the nursery the roots of the seedlings are pruned to encourage growth of the rooting system.

The production of seed in seed orchards by cuttings or by grafting shoots from stud trees onto seedlings was explained. The test for susceptibility to *Sirex* was very interesting. An extract of the mucus which lubricates the egg is obtained from the female *Sirex* Wasp and cuttings from the trees are stood in a solution of the extract. Reaction by the susceptible cuttings is quite obvious in 3 days.

Mr Hall then explained the clearing, planting and harvesting techniques developed over the years. The efforts to simulate the favourable conditions for planting that occur after burning the windrows included addition of nutrients, injecting the soil with fumigants and adding fertiliser. Good results can be recorded with Methyl bromide but at the cost of \$400 an acre!



PINE FOREST PRODUCTION

contd..

New equipment has been developed saving much manpower but is very costly. Planting machines not only plant the seedlings but have two jets that spray a chemical (Simazine) that stops germination of seeds in the surrounding soil and so increases production without too many weed problems. Fertiliser is also added by the planting machine. Samples of the leaves of pine trees are collected to take the nutrient levels. This is used as a guide to tree requirements and the necessary chemicals can then be provided. The logging machines uproot trees, strip off the branches and stack the timber ready for transport to the mill.

Many aspects of pine forestry, production and harvesting were shown by a selection of photographs and explanations on display boards.

Bon Thompson.

REPORT ON EXCURSION TO A.P.M. SILVER CREEK TREE FARM - 24/11/73

The day started with a cool wind and clouds but by lunchtime was a lovely sunny day. After meeting our leader Mr M. Hall of A.P.M. Forests, at Morwell, about 11 cars followed him down the Thorpdale Road to our first port of call. This was the northern section (Golden Gully area) of Silver Creek Tree Farm where we were met by Mr John Dargaville, Management Superintendent of the Farm. Stands of Eucalypts had been left on the tops of some of the hills, mainly as a screen for the seed orchard we were to visit later on. Young pines had been planted here in 1968, 1970 and 1972. The road we were on had been cleared of bush on both sides, as had the gully below, and our A.P.M. leaders faced a barrage of questions and suggestions that had not been forthcoming at the previous night's meeting. It transpired that the A.P.M. forestry staff had held a similar excursion some time earlier to assess the methods they had used in this area, had recognised errors and felt that this gully should have been left uncleared as a major gully (to our biased minds, for the benefit of the wild life). An Onion Orchid was found here.

We continued on past young eucalypt plantations, older (logged?) forest with very red and beautiful young regrowth, and a hill of golden Goodenia. Our second stop was further west in the Golden Gully area close to McDonald's Track at a plantation of 2 year old Southern Bluegums (E. globulus) from seed raised in the Huon Estuary of Tasmania. This is suitable for short rotation crops with full mechanical harvest and allows for whole tree chipping, using the leaves as well, which requires more chemical treatment but less labour. There is also the possibility of extraction of eucalyptus oil although globulus does not have the best oil. The stumps are left intact in the hope of further regeneration. Mr Hall said that, despite all their eucalypt plantations, A.P.M. will never be self-supporting in eucalypts and will have to rely on natural forests. Botanists discovered Sun Orchids and Cinnamon Bells here before leaving the area.

Turning along McDonald's Track we stopped at the Seed Orchard near the foot of the fire tower (which some of our young and not so young members promptly climbed). Here growing in isolation surrounded by eucalypt timber, were young pine seedlings grafted onto older pines.

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EXCURSION TO SILVER CREEK TREE FARM

contd..

Some incompatibility of tissue was seen, where the graft was going well but the older tree had weakened off. Most of the grafts were from imported stock, but some experimentation was being done on local adaption, eg. drought resistance. (At Balook Seed Orchard some local selections were incorporated with the imported ones.) Before leaving this area, time was given to explore the eucalypt forest and the botanists had a field day, discovering Onion Orchids, Bird Orchids, Musky Caladenia, Candles (Stackhousia), Clematis, Leek Orchids, Tetratheca, and finished Mountain Greenhoods (Pterostylis alpina).

We next passed by Bird's Gully, which is an A.P.M. natural reserve, and paused to discuss its management. Naturally we were all for leaving it as it is and not as an open public reserve with picnic facilities!! It was agreed that a suitable sign be erected and suggested by us that A.P.M. be given due credit thereon, e.g. A.P.M. Forests Flora and Fauna Reserve. We made the sad discovery on the main road here of the dead body of a little naked joey, obviously fallen from the pouch of its car victim mother whose body we found further on.

On the way to our lunch venue, we passed through miles of pine forest, all of it dying according to the limited view of the writer. The lower limbs were either dead or lying on the ground, and it was not until lunchtime that amused forestry officers were able to explain that a higher view would have revealed well developed and very much alive upper halves to every tree, all very natural in the planting of the forest. Needless to say, this happier view was verified on the outward trip. We stopped for lunch at Ten Mile Creek where the A.P.M. had a hillside picnic area complete with barbecue and lunch shelter, surrounded by a pine plantation but protected by great old chestnut and walnut trees. No names mentioned of who had the giant T-bone steaks . . .

Refreshed, and rallied by our Marshall, Mr Libcke, we went on to Ten Mile Creek State School vicinity to look at an experiment being carried out on the difference in growth between two pine plantations, one aged 17 years on a cleared eucalypt forest site and the other, aged 18 years, on former pasture land. It was clear that the latter produced better pines, possibly because fertiliser may have been used on the pasture land in earlier times or because of more suitable fungus species available to the plant roots. Boletus was often found under pines but Rhizopogon was preferred in this symbiotic association between bacteria and fungi in the soil for association with the root of the pine, and this can have a modifying effect on the tree. It was the practice to remove every third row for access and to reduce numbers for better growth of the others. Competition was mainly for moisture, not light.

Our next stop was at a Mountain Ash (*E. regnans*) seedling seed orchard containing young plants planted this year, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  and 3 $\frac{1}{2}$  years ago. They were not grafted (as the pines were in the seed orchard near Coalville) as eucalypts do not graft readily. In this orchard, the mother tree was known. Seed was taken from the Jecralangs and planted in a nursery, then seedlings planted out 5 at a time and gradually culled down to 1 by 3 $\frac{1}{2}$  years. In this way it is possible to keep a record of the progeny from the mother trees. The seed is required for the Jecralangs and higher elevations about 1500 ft.

contd...pp5



EXCURSION TO SILVER CREEK TREE FARM

contd..

On our last port of call along the Mountain Hut Road, to illustrate something of A.P.M. clearing policy. To our sensitive viewpoint, it was just an ugly cleared hillside with windrows of felled timber, not a very pretty last memory of an otherwise interesting and memorable excursion. At least it did disclose a wonderful view across the valley to the Jeeralangs. However, the A.P.M. had left a strip of natural bush along the Mountain Hut Road, which had the aesthetic effect of hiding the desolation from the roadway. Here Mr Hall and Mr Dargavelle faced a final barrage which must surely have told them all they wanted to know of our reactions to A.P.M.'s forestry in Gippsland. And it was clear that we, too, had learned a great deal from them with a better understanding of their problems and work. On the subject of conservation of wildlife both flora and fauna, it was agreed that more co-operation is occurring, particularly as a result of public opinion, but still more is needed right down to the bulldozer man - between State and Local Governments, A.P.M and similar organisations, conservation groups and the public.

On behalf of all those present, Mr Thompson thanked Mr Hall and Mr Dargavelle for a most informative, interesting and worthwhile day.

B.Kemp.

NESTS AND BABIES NOVEMBER 1973

I was lucky enough to locate a Pipits nest with three babies on the roadside to Mt.Hotham. They would extend their heads with open beaks when the nest was touched.

On a sand -bar at Lakes Entrance two Hooded Dotterel babies were found under a tussock. They were nearly as big as their parents when seen with them later.

The tiny baby of a Red-capped Dotterel was running along the waters edge and another under a plant. The parents put on a "broken wing" display when one was near the baby and it took quite a while to locate, as it blends with its surroundings with the same pattern on the back as on the eggs.

Two Red-capped Dotterels and a Hooded Dotterels nests with eggs were found - if they can be called nests because where the eggs were looked the same as anywhere else.

ECHIDNAS OR MOSQUITOES DAY OUT NOVEMBER 1973

It was the Echidnas day out the day I spent "birding" with Mrs Joan Vincent around Bairnsdale. Three were seen, one at a pool of water, another rooting in an ant mound and the third along the edge of the road.

We visited forest land South West of Bairnsdale, then the Glenaladale National Park. I saw my first Rufous Fantail for the season and several Black-faced Fly catchers in the Den. We were not lucky enough to see the Lowin Honey-eater, but it was calling.

Another activity that befell us was the mosquitoes. Like swarms of bees with stinging powers as good and as neither of us had thought of repellent we were very busy slapping at the beasts. I am still itching from them. However apart from the mosquitoes it was a very nice day out.

Heather Christensen



### BIRDS AND PICNICKERS

It is always pleasant to find birds coming, cautiously perhaps, but without fear, for scraps, in bushland surroundings frequented by picnickers. Added to the pleasure of seeing the birds is the knowledge that others have enjoyed their company, and presumably fed them. This is one reason why those of us who visit Jim Peterson's Lookout in an area frequented by many native birds, take cheese or cake crumbs to scatter round the cairn. We hope some day it will be known as a place of birds and we know this would have pleased our friend Jim Peterson.

Amongst birds seen coming for crumbs in other places a few are out standing - the Pilot Birds and Olive Whistlers at Bulga Park, a Pink Robin at Tarra Valley Park, the Crimson Rosellas of Wilsons Promontary and at Powers Lookout, between Mansfield and Cheshunt, a pair of Sacred Kingfishers.

These last were seen during a recent visit to the north-east with our Hon. Secretary. Miss Rossiter, who had taken us to the lookout, first saw them feeding nestlings in a hole in a dead limb, and soon afterwards they flew down to branches near the place where we lunched, and waited for crumbs, though not taking them unless we were about 20 yards away.

J. Galbraith.

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### THE TELEPHONE LINK

Members may know of the method of contacting each other for special outings, meetings etc. with the telephone link.

This was devised by Miss Heather Christensen and has been successful each time it has been used.

Recently there have been changes in telephone numbers of people concerned with it. We wonder if members feel this is a worthwhile operation. If so Miss Christensen could reorganise it with the new numbers and also include any others who have not been "in" before.

Miss Christensen or the Secretary will be pleased to hear from you if you wish to be included.

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The next Committee Meeting of L.V.F.N.C. will be held Tuesday January 15th. at the home of Miss Galbraith, Tyers.  
General members welcome at these meetings.

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Articles for inclusion in February issue of L.V.Naturalist must be in the hands of the editor no later than Monday February 4th 1974.

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Latrobe Valley Naturalist.

Details of contributing clubs are as follows:

Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs I. Peterson  
14 Barry Street,  
Morwell 3840. Tel. M'11 342129

General Meetings commence at 7.30pm. on the 4th Friday each month  
at the Yallourn State School, YALLOURN.

SALE F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs K. Newnham,  
P.O. Box 302  
Sale 3850. Tel. Sale 441046

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month  
at the C.W.A. Rooms, Macarthur Street, Sale.

TRARALGON F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Wall  
156 Kay Street,  
Traralgon. 3844. Tel. T'gon  
741948.

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month at the  
City Council Reception Rooms. TRARALGON.

WARRAGUL F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Brooks  
3 Nobel Street,  
Warragul, 3820. Tel. W'gul 21563

Meetings commence at 8.00pm. on the 3rd. Friday each month  
at the Albert Street State School, WARRAGUL.

Subscriptions payable to the Honorary Treasurer:

Mrs E. Lubcke,  
122a Helen Street,  
Morwell. 3840.

If transport is needed on excursions please contact Mrs H. Crane  
Tel. Yallourn 622215

The LATROBE VALLEY NATURALIST is the official publication of the  
Latrobe Valley Field Naturalists' Club. Contributions on any aspect of  
Natural History are invited from members of all clubs  
and should be addressed to:

Honorary Editor (Mrs L. Padfield )  
42 Strzelecki Road,  
Yallourn. 3838.







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COMING EVENTS

Warragul F.N.C.

Meeting:

Subject:

Friday 15th February ANNUAL MEETING  
Wyperfeld National Park  
(impressions of four members)

Excursion:

Sunday 17th February  
contact Secretary for details.

Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

Meeting:

Speaker:

Subject:

Friday 22nd February  
Mr Alan Reid of A.C.F.  
Butterflies

Excursion:

Saturday 23rd February with Mr Reid  
Details to be finalised at meeting.

Photoflora:

Thursday 14th March at Morwell Town Hall.

Traralgon F.N.C.

Meeting:

Speaker:

Excursion:

Friday 1st March  
Mr A. Roberts "Wild Life"  
Sunday 3rd March to Sunday Island.  
Meet at Port Albert 7.45 am.

Bookings to be made with Secretary for this.  
Boat will only take limited number.



L.V.F.N.C. CHRISTMAS BARBECUE .

The 8th of December was indeed a perfect day for our Christmas get-together for a barbecue at Martin Walker Reserve along the Middle Creek Road.

To get there, it was necessary to branch off the Midland Highway at Yinnar. But I was sure that a recent visit to it had taken us along the highway to the Middle Creek Turnoff that I ignored my passenger's doubts and went well on the way to Boolarra before admitting that I was wrong. Result, Betty Kemp and I reached our destination half an hour after the stated meeting time.

We arrived to the very welcome sight of a table set out with a large bowl of delicious fruit cup, tumblers and a tray of daintily wrapped Christmas Cake in individual portions. This, of course, was the thought and work of our very thoughtful and efficient Secretary, Iris Peterson, who was today, the transport guest of Mr and Mrs McElroy. That table with its holly-spray decoration gave a lovely Christmas touch to the gathering.

Although we were behind-time arrivals, the remainder of the twentyseven who eventually made up the gathering trickled in after us, having on the way, made detours according to inclination - some to see the Tree Orchids in the nearby Morwell National Park, others bird observing, or just to look about and enjoy.

The reserve was tree shaded and very peaceful, with the stream tinkling musically by. The barbecue fires and odours added, in due course, a homely yet beautifully bush atmosphere and heightened already well-developed appetites to just the right degree for full enjoyment of the hearty and friendly meal. Then it was back to the ring of comfortable portable chairs with its constantly changing small chatting groups, or group as a whole, as inclination or topic decreed.

A few 'birdos' were attracted to the stream-bank by the sight and sound of bird life thereabout. Grey Fantails were plentiful and very active. Heather Christensen, the most knowledgeable birdo present, was keen to confirm a previous beleived sighting of a Lewin Honeyeater; but although the bird in question was seen several times, it would not allow sufficient observation for definite identification. A call that resembled the Lewin's was heard intermittently. Eastern Spinebills, Yellow Faced Honeyeaters and other small birds that were too active to permit identification were busily engaged in the trees overhead or in flying to and fro; Mrs Lubcke and Heather were both almost sure that they saw a mistletoe bird. Ravens, Magpies and a Blackbird were also visitors, the former two to the trees on the far bank of the stream.

As 8 O'clock approached and dusk showed signs of closing in, people began, with obvious reluctance, to think about getting home before dark. The main packing had been done previously, but now chairs were folded, with owners still chatting to one another the while; then, one by one, cars moved off amid waves and exchange

Altogether the day was perfect - the weather, the bush, the birdsongs, and even the flies co-operated to make it so. Mosquitoes were just a little troublesome towards evening, but, to crown all, the way home was brightened by a lovely glowing sunset.

What better end to a perfect day! !

H. Crane



WEEKEND IN CENTRAL VICTORIA. 27/28 OCTOBER, 1973.

We arrived at Maryborough in a colossal thunderstorm, the rain tumbling down in bucketsfull over the last few miles, inundating the overgrown paddocks of wild oats and thistles as high as the fences. Paddocks already saturated by this extraordinary wet year inland. Every swamp and depression is full of weedy water yet waterbirds were few, no doubt having such a wide choice of feeding grounds.

The carpark had apparently been recently topdressed with clay, and we wondered uneasily if we should ever be able to extricate our vehicles when the time came to leave. It is situated on the shores of a small lake. But the Saturday morning dawned fine and sunny. Many natural history exhibits were on display in the hall as we arrived for the council meeting of the Victorian Field Naturalists Clubs Association, and we each received a handsome brochure describing the town's attractions and the weekend's activities.

All regions of Victoria were represented except the Northeast, but there was nothing of great import on the agenda. Four clubs had declined to affiliate; fifteen had joined, up to the end of October, out of a total of 31. Geelong members spoke of their problem plant, the South African Boneseed, which has infested a long strip of Southern Victoria from the Mornington Peninsula to Lorne. They urge all clubs to make their members familiar with this shrub, its appearance and its dangers, as it is still sometimes found in private gardens. Volunteer pine seedlings are another of their problems, but fire will take care of these, while the native bush will regenerate.

Mid-Murray Club asked our support for their resolution passed by the Western Victorian Association F.N.C.A. in August, calling on the Minister for Lands to provide more finance and trained staff for the National Herbarium of Vic. in order to bring it up to world standards again.

After lunch we had a choice of excursions and we elected to go with the "birdos". Out past the old cemetery was a forested area dotted with huge mine dumps, familiar objects around Maryborough. Here were Rainbow Birds and Pardalotes busy about their nesting burrows. In the trees along the creek the Dusky Woodswallows nested in the fork of a tree. Jacky Winter sat high above in its tiny nest. By the purest stroke of luck, when investigating an old thrush's nest, I blundered against a stump. Something catapulted out and lit on the nearest limb, a curious little brown bird, seemingly all eyes, a bird I most wished to see, the Owl et Nightjar. There were four white eggs in the hollow, a very low nesting site, said the local experts.

The ringing notes of the Gilbert whistler resounded on the hill. We trailed this bird with much hand-clapping to incite it to further efforts, but only caught occasional glimpses of the elusive songster, nor found its nest. The Hooded Robin was more obliging, with a nest and eggs in a low exposed sapling. One ardent hunter with splendid eyesight found us the baby's bootee nest of the Mistletoe Bird, which capped this interesting afternoon.

This was actually the Western Naturalists weekend and in the evening they held their annual meeting. It was followed by the guest speaker, well known bird man Roy Cooper, his subject "Inland Birds". What a feast of bird lore and pictures he provided; splendid slides of inland Australia and of unusual birds, with a running commentary that held his listeners spellbound.



WEEKEND IN CENTRAL VICTORIAcontd..

And among his audience a well-known figure, perhaps better known to an older generation of naturalists, Alec Chisolm. Sir Alec is, I think, his proper title.

On Sunday morning everyone set off for the bush again. Maryborough boasts State Forest along nearly three quarters of its city boundaries, so that the bush begins where the streets leave off. One enters a dry stony forest of mixed eucalypts, including Red Ironbark; Grey, Yellow, Red, and Long-leaf Box; Yellow Gum and Stringybarks. There are many wattles, a couple of grevilleas, and many other small flowering shrubs as well as orchids. The most notable of them, to me, was *Prostanthera saxicola*, a pale flowered mintbush something after the style of our *P. denticulata* of the Rosedale heaths, which also occurs there. Both species are attractive, the blossom over-shadowing the small scant foliage. We had hoped to see the double Fairy Waxflower, but had missed out when we chose the bird excursion the day before.

Local naturalists are proud of their several reserves and sanctuaries, and are working ardently for others. They would like to see 25,000 acres of Maryborough's distinctive goldfields region appropriately reserved to ensure its permanence as a forested area. As a parting gesture they set out a luxurious home-cooked afternoon tea there in the bush, among boiling coppers, for their many visitors.

For the benefit of gardeners who do not know *Osteospermum*, the Boneseed bush, I would describe it as a woody shrub, fence high, suitable for hedges. It has bold yellow daisy or marguerite-like flowers in heads or clusters. The leaves are comparatively broad and coarsely toothed, bright green. There are other yellow South African daisy flowers often seen in cultivation, but their foliage is much finer. Next time you see anything answering this description, investigate it please.

F. Lyndon

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MT. BAW BAW AT CHRISTMAS

We have been to Mt Baw Baw in November and at the end of January but not at the end of December. So this year (1973) we decided to see what different plants were flowering there at Christmas time.

The forest on the trip up was beautiful with the great variation of leaf shape and colour - the lacy blue-green of the Silver Wattle leaves, the dense bright green of the Blackwoods, the long Eucalypt leaves, the distinctive arrangement of the Blanket-leaf and the very beautiful golden-brown of the new growth on the Beech Trees. No Christmas tree could look prettier than these lovely trees especially at this time of year. Amongst all this growth was the Christmas Bush (*Prostanthera lasiantha*) in full bloom. The ferns of the understorey were delightful with their lacy patterns and the light green of the newly unfurled fronds.

As we neared the summit of MT Baw Baw the Alpine Mintbushes were a mass of flowers with the characteristic dark magenta of the alpine form of the Triggers scattered here and there.

contd...



MT BAW BAW AT CHRISTMAS contd..

After a cuppa we set out to explore the snow plain in the valley past Baw Baw. This is the very beginning of the Tyers River. At the other end of the valley is the source of the Tanjil River. We had not gone very far before we discovered the main difference in the mountain now and at the end of the month. The boggy patches are much less solid. In endeavouring not to tread on plants I stepped into the middle of a black area, which to the casual glance looked safe enough, and discovered just how soft the mud can be. I went down over the tops of my gumboots before I stopped sinking - both feet in. As I stood there Ollie and Max wondered how not to lose my gumboots. Fortunately my slacks are rather full in the legs and they covered the tops of my boots. With the aid of a stick I was carrying I lunged out boots and all. But oh the Mess! I had never seen such black mud. Oh why did I wear my cream slacks? At the next running water I washed off as much mud as I could and left my slacks out of my boots to dry. Ollie was a gentleman and did not take my photo.

After this episode we tested the ground before walking on any suspicious areas.

The mountain was beautiful. The Triggers were all in flower and not almost finished as we usually see them. The wild Violets were as big as ever holding their dainty faces above the snow grass, which by the way has lovely purple flowers. The flag - Libertia pulchella was flowering everywhere with its dainty cream flowers and I think every plant of the Baw Baw Berry had at least one and sometimes many translucent bells on display. It may be wishful thinking but I felt there were more plants of this berry this year than I remember from other trips. The snow white flowers of the Otway Daisy-bush reflected the bright sunlight. Nature arranged a stopping place half way down into the valley as there was such a display of Sky Lilies with their pale blue flowers peeping between the blue-green leaves that we just had to stop. We had seen a few Sky Lilies before but never as many as here and some still with the dew on them as it was the side of the mountain away from the morning sun. We spent our rest period photographing and admiring.

Down in the valley we explored all the tiny plants. So dense were the Alpine Sundews in some areas that their maroon leaves covered the Sphagnum Moss. Only a few of the Sundews were in flower. The flowers on the creeping coprosmas; the special Eyebright - Euphrasia gibbsiae; Alpine and Mountain Woodruffs, a Haloragis, two beautiful white Heaths Epacris paludosa and E. petrophila and two daisies B. catodiocarpa with grasslike leaves and B. obovata with broader hairy leaves all claimed our attention. A Flame Robin, Pippits and young Pied Currawongs shared the area with us. We rested on large flat rocks to eat lunch. I was a little apart from Max and Ollie as I removed my boots to dry my wet socks which were beginning to chaff my heels and toes. Here we found the Carpet Heath with as yet only a few flowers. Socks dried, inner man replenished and weary limbs rested, we continued our exploration of the valley. Towards the far end of the snow plain we found another white heath Epacris breviflora with its short open flowers. Here also the Richea was beautiful. Another reward for the early visit. The delicate flower of this plant is protected by a large tan bract which falls off as the flowers mature. Then the protective "petal hood" falls off and the stamens are exposed. We were able to photograph a series to show all the stages. The rare Senecio pectinata was flowering but we had trouble finding a complete flower as they had all been partially eaten. Orites with its delicate lemon flowers added to the scene.

contd.,.



MT BAW BAW AT CHRISTMAS contd..

On the rising ground on the far side of the plain we found the delightful white Oxalis in prolific bloom. We had only seen the occasional flower before but here there were hundreds - such a beautiful display. Ferns grew in slips in the rocks. Here we also found a plant that looked different from the coprosnas we had been seeing. It was growing near the bottom of a rock in a horizontal crack not far above the sphagnum moss. Miss Galbraith identified it as Coprosma moorei that Mr Morrison photographed last year. Its berries had not matured sufficiently to be beautiful translucent purple they will be later.

Once again Mt Baw Baw had shared its treasures and kept us fascinated throughout the whole day.

Bon Thompson.

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SURVIVAL

Survival is a Conservation Magazine published by the Gould League of Victoria. Some members took advantage of the offer to receive this magazine during 1973. and found it a most interesting publication.

You may now order 1974 issues of Survival. 25 cents per copy, 75 cents per year. Magazine to be published March, June, September 1974.

Mrs Lubcke will receive your money and orders at the February meeting.

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Warragul F.N.C. excursion to Powelltown was a lovely hike. We believe that the leeches had a field day!! just like a swarm of bees on the track.

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Members will be pleased to know that our printer Mr Sterkenburg is now feeling much better after his recent spell of resting in bed. We hope he continues to improve in health now.

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ANNUAL MEETING.

The Annual Meeting of L.V.F.N.C. will be held on Friday March 22nd 1974. Election of office bearers due for re election will also take place at this meeting. Office bearers for election are Secretary Mrs Peterson

Vice Presidents. Mr Sterkenburg and Mr Lyndon.

Nomination Forms will be included in March Naturalist.

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Articles for publication in March Naturalist must be in the hands of the editor Mrs L. Padfield 99 Chamberlain Rd. Newborough 3828. no later than March 4th.

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REPORT OF BUSINESS MEETING HELD JANUARY 15TH 1974

December Barbecue. Reported that this was a great success. We all echo the thoughts of the article by Mrs Crane.

Photoflora. Posters, handbills and tickets received.

Tickets will be available at February meeting, all members are urged to support our effort to have photoflora. Thursday 14th March at Morwell Town Hall 8.00pm. If you haven't been before it is well worth seeing these slides which are all of Australian Native Plants.

Photoflora is sponsored by the NATIVE PLANT PRESERVATION SOCIETY.

Increased Postal Charges.

We have been advised that the cost of posting the Naturalist will in future be doubled. Cost for Yallourn was 2 cents will now be 4 cents.

Cost for others was 2½ cents will now be 5 cents.

On the basis of these costs there is no choice but to raise the cost of the Naturalist by 50 cents. In future the cost would be \$2.50 for Naturalist.

Annual Meeting will be held March 22nd

Notice of Motion. Moved by Mr Wall that subscription to Naturalist be increased by 50 cents.

This motion to be voted upon at Annual Meeting.

Victorian Naturalist. Members may not be aware that Mrs Lyndon has been sending reports of our club activities for publication in Vic. Naturalist. Committee moved a vote of thanks to Mrs Lyndon for her efforts.

Programme 1974. Further discussion about this. Most of the details had been finalised so it was decided to publish the programme as much as was finalised. alterations from time to time are to be expected.

Nova Nova Trestle Bridge. A letter was received from Miss Ruth Clarke of Lakes Entrance asking for support in retaining this structure which is in danger of extinction. Letters will be written to appropriate authorities.

Department of Urban and Regional Development have requested to receive copies of the Naturalist.

Conservation Council of Victoria have asked for information which will be used in compiling submission for Werribee River area.

Environment Protection Authority. request help with submission for Latrobe River and McAlister River Catchment areas.

Printing of Naturalist. Decided that we should seek the assistance of more people to use the duplicator in cases of sickness etc.

Supper Roster February 22nd Miss Galbraith Miss Christensen

Next Committee Meeting will be held at the home of Mr and Mrs Branson  
72 Railway Ave. Yallourn (near traffic lights) Tuesday February 19th 1974.



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Latrobe Valley Naturalist.

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Details of contributing clubs are as follows:

Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs I. Peterson  
14 Barry Street,  
Morwell 3840. Tel. M'11 342129

General Meetings commence at 7.30pm. on the 4th Friday each month  
at the Yallourn State School, YALLOURN.

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SALE F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs K. Newnham,  
P.O. Box 302  
Sale 3850. Tel. Sale 441046

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month  
at the C.W.A. Rooms, Macarthur Street, Sale.

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TRARALGON F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Wall  
156 Kay Street,  
Traralgon. 3844. Tel. T'gon  
741948.

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month at the  
City Council Reception Rooms. TRARALGON.

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WARRAGUL F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Brooks  
3 Nobel Street,  
Warragul, 3820. Tel. W'gul 21563

Meetings commence at 8.00pm. on the 3rd. Friday each month  
at the Albert Street State School, WARRAGUL.

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Subscriptions payable to the Honorary Treasurer:

Mrs E. Lubcke,  
122a Helen Street,  
Morwell. 3840.

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If transport is needed on excursions please contact Mrs H. Crane  
Tel. Yallourn 622215

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The LATROBE VALLEY NATURALIST is the official publication of the  
Latrobe Valley Field Naturalists' Club. Contributions on any aspect of  
Natural History are invited from members of all clubs  
and should be addressed to:

Honorary Editor (Mrs L. Padfield )  
42 Strzelecki Road,  
Yallourn. 3838.









MARCH, 1974

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# *Latrobe Valley Naturalist*

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COMING EVENTS

Warragul F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday 15th March

Mr A.Coe. Illustrated talk on BIRDS.

Excursion:

Sunday 17th March

Contact Secretary for details.

Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday 22nd March (Annual Meeting)

Mallee Flora ..Miss Galbraith.

Excursion:

Saturday 23rd March

Meet at Arboretum Hazelwood 1.15pm.

Destination to be decided.

Traralgon F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday 5th April

Geology and using a microscope.

Mr and Mrs. Williams

Excursion:

Saturday 6th April Tyers Gorge area

Meet at Yallourn Kemot Hall 10.00 am.

THE CAMP-OUT AT ANGLER'S REST.

Approx. 80 people camped at Angler's Rest during the holiday weekend in January. Some members arrived on Friday and by lunchtime on Saturday most of the campers were in residence.

Mr Rogers took a party to Buckety Plains on Saturday afternoon. After the heat of the camping area it was refreshing on the high plains with a slight breeze.

Most of the plants were familiar to us from previous visits to alpine areas but as usual we were delighted with the display. There were sphagnum bogs, snow plains and also areas of snow gums with all their associated plants. Very spectacular was a red Starfish Fungus also called a Stinkhorn. It commences its fruiting stage as a soft white puffball which bursts to expose this strange evil smelling fungus. It consists of a hollow trumpet about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  ins. (6.3 cm approx) long and around the edge are 4 pairs of "arms" radiating outwards. The fungus attracts flies and blowflies. It was possible to see the remains of the puffball at the base of the trumpet. These fungi were perhaps the most photographed specimens for the weekend.

From Buckety Plains we moved on to the edge of the Bogong High Plains near Mt. Colo. The Bogong Daisy-bush (Olearia frostii) was in full bloom. These low bushes have blue flowers about 1ins (2.5cm approx) in diameter. Euphrasia scabra (Yellow "yebright") is a low plant with many lovely mauve to white flowers and is a special alpine form of this species. Helichrysum alpinum (Alpine Everlasting) was a new species for the Thompsons. Its clustered white flowers were in full bloom but there were several bushes with some rasy-red buds. The red colouring is the involucre bracts.

On the return to camp we were shown an unnamed Grevillea with blue-green holly-like leaves and tan flowers.

The night commenced quite hot but by morning everyone had all their bedclothes covering them. 90'clock was the starting time on Sunday morning as we had a long day ahead of us. Along the banks near the camp were bushes of Banksia canei in bloom and some Elderberry Panax which looked very different from the plants of the fern gullies. However we knew this to be a very variable plant and were not surprised to find it was the same species as the lowland plant.

We could not pass Buckety Plains and the beginning of the Bogong High Plains without stopping but the next stop was a quarry with a very interesting formation of basalt. The beautiful Brown Edelweiss (Ewartia nubigena) had just a couple of flowers. On the plains it was all in seed. I had always wanted to see this lovely little mat plant which is only recorded in squares R and V in Victoria.

How time flies when you are enjoying yourself. Before we realised it lunchtime was upon us. We lunched beside the beautiful blue Rocky Valley Dam and found many more tiny alpine plants. After passing the wall of the dam, the next stop was Mt. McKay which provided the most colourful display of alpine flora including the Royal Bluebell with its spectacular large deep blue flowers. The lookout provided names for the many surrounding peaks including Buffalo, Feathertop, Hotham, Fainter, Loch, etc.



THE CAMP-OUT AT ANGLER'S REST

contd..

A little swiftly flowing stream next claimed our attention. Along its bank grew the beautiful silky leaves of the Silky Snowdaisy. The long silky hairs on both sides of the leaves gave the plants a silvery appearance. This plant is endemic to the Bogong locality.

From here the excursion completed a circle through surrounding country to return once more to the wall of the Rocky Valley Dam. The scenery was spectacular and lovely specimens of Helichrysum sterlingii (Ovens Everlasting) lined portions of the road.

Afternoon tea was at a shelter at the junction of the road with Falls Creek Bogong Road. From here members made their own way home through Falls Creek to allow everyone to spread out and avoid some of the dust. Here also we said goodbye to Miss Nancy Rossiter and Mrs Jakobson who had been with us most of the day.

We had many stops on the road home to investigate snow plains sphagnum bogs and other places that held our interest. We had covered about 70 miles (112 Km) for the day.

After tea many members joined in a sing-song before retiring after a very full day.

Ion ThompsonLOCUSTS IN NORTH EASTERN VICTORIA 1974

6/2/74 If I looked out any of my windows during this last week I could see clouds of Locusts flying over the next door paddock and sometimes over my own block.

They travel west and north, contrary to the direction one would have expected. Most fly by, but some settle, so that when I go on my daily plant inspection I disturb clouds of them in the grass and am bombarded by them as I get in the way of their flight.

So far they have not attacked plants and it appears to be accidental if they even land on any, but this situation may change at any moment so I inspect each plant every day for signs of damage. The fly-wire guards are ready (made last year for the flightless grasshopper plague) to cover the small ones, and a Phenyl spray (1 tablespoon / 1 Gallon water) for the most precious bigger plants. This concoction is said to be very unpalatable to insects and may deter the locusts from eating the foliage sprayed with it, although it won't kill them.

My theory is that the locusts and grasshoppers prefer to eat the pastures if they are green and will only attack other green plants when the grass and other herbage has dried out.

The last rain germinated the clover seed and the locusts may be eating the young clover, though I really don't think they are eating anything at this stage, but mainly flying by and resting occasionally.

contd pp3

LOCUSTS IN NORTH EASTERN VICTORIA contd..

The Agriculture Department gives daily advice in the local news session on the radio. They tell us that swarms are not dense enough to spray but to watch where they lay their eggs and spray when they hatch.

I am told that the female locust deposits her eggs, several inches below the surface of the ground with a long ovipositor, so in the process of laying she would be handicapped in making a speedy takeoff if disturbed. One would expect therefore to be able to detect the egg-laying process. So far, although the locusts have been thick on various hard surfaces such as drives, they disperse rapidly when approached.

Today a south-westerly near gale is blowing, and I have seen no swarms flying, so am hoping they have gone, although a few locusts and small flightless grasshoppers are still in the grass; the next generation is another problem.

19/2/74 The "fly past" of locusts has continued every day since 6/2/74, waxing and waning with variations in temperature- the hotter the day the heavier the swarms.

They reached a peak on Saturday 9th February when they became so thick that the horses were affected and galloped madly around, presumably trying to escape the hail of bodies hitting them. Yesterday, although it was hot there were very few about, either in the air or on the ground. Today it is raining, which would reduce their activity anyway, but I saw practically none on my morning round of inspection.

So far damage to plants has been minimal if indeed there has been any.

The officer from the Agriculture Department speaking on the country news session tells us cheerfully that though the swarms are abating, in about a fortnight they will be worse than ever. This will be when the eggs that have been laid hatch out. So there may be yet another addition to this story.

N.T. Rossiter

Miss Rossiter cannot vouch for the spray as she has not had occasion to use it.

I have just been told that 110 copies of the "Naturalist" are posted each month and that 34 or more go to family groups.

So that would mean approximately 150 people read it. The names listed in last years index of contributors was 24 -- a very small percentage don't you agree.

I once heard one of the "regulars" say 'It is nice to read the Naturalist without seeing my name'. It gives one pleasure to contribute, but I am beginning to feel that I am one of a small group that sees something to write about, or are all the other naturalists "BLIND" or just "LAZY".

If you enjoy reading it, surely YOU could put pen to paper and perhaps save only receiving a front and back cover with blank pages in the near future.

They'll print anything

They're DESPERATE

See, they printed this ! !

H. Christensen.



Notes, and Observations on the rare Skipper Butterfly Hesperilla chaostola s.sp. chaos Waterhouse 1933.

Kept and recorded by the author from 1918 to 1974.

My first experience of this rare Skipper was on November 12th 1918, when I found my first two specimens. They were resting on a piece of the food plant Gahnia sieberana.

The Skippers were freshly emerged, and the wings not yet hardened sufficiently for flight. - I was able to handle them, and place them in a cork lined zinc collecting box, in about half an hour, or a little longer, they were ready for the killing bottle. I want to refrain from giving a long technical description of the Skipper for that is too often confusing to the ordinary reader. It can always be obtained and followed from the technical books which are now available. Sufficient to say that the male Skipper is dark brown above with the usual yellow hyaline (translucent) spots on forewing, and the hindwing also dark brown, with a larger central yellowish-orange area, underside the cell orange, the remainder suffused greyish-lilac with obscure darker markings.

The female is larger, also dark brown, and the yellow and orange markings all larger than in the male.

The food plant of the larva is Gahnia sieberana, the larva and pupa are quite characteristic of the species, but possess distinctive characters which separate them from the other Hesperilla species, as, for instance, the pattern and sculpture of the pupal cap.

The habitat is rather distinctive. This rare Skipper seems to favour the wet, damp, heads of particular gullies which generally run in a northerly or easterly direction, and possess a good growth of Gahnia sieberana, the food plant of the larvae, as well as numerous wild flowers.

These Skipper habitats where chaostola has become established are very hard to find in the bush, and require many years of careful and intensive searching.

It can therefore be readily understood, that these very specialised areas, when found after years of searching, must remain a secret, otherwise this rare butterfly would soon become overcollected and vanish from the area as it seems to have done from the Blue Mountains where it is believed to be extinct.

Another danger with chaostola, is the fact that it has a two year life cycle.

Eggs are laid in October and November; larvae feed slowly on the Gahnia during the summer, and following winter and spring, becoming full fed late in December or early Autumn. They remain full grown until the second winter when they pupate, emerging as adults in the following spring - two years from the time the eggs were laid.

It can therefore be seen that the rare chaostola during its lifetime has a lot of hazards to face. Firstly there are the ravages of birds, and several species of parasites, bushfires and lastly MAN.

It is a wonder to me that H. chaostola can overcome these many hazards. May I again make a request to Naturalists everywhere, not to overcollect this rare species, but to collect with care, and understanding, and avoid taking many female chaostola at the one time. By doing so give the butterflies a chance to lay eggs for further generations.

To most Australian naturalists it seems a very extraordinary fact, that a butterfly has a two year cycle in its development, but I have many hundreds of species of butterflies in my collection which come from the Northern Hemisphere; from all over Europe, Scandinavia, Russia, Japan and Canada, all of which have a two year life cycle.

I suspect that we may have other species of Skippers which also have a two year life cycle, but we have not enough proof up to the present time.

During June 1921 I purchased a new property. The development of this, and other responsibilities, left me very little time for any butterfly work so it was not until 1926-1927, and the early thirties that I again found sufficient time to devote to H.chaostola. During those years, I was able to put together a reasonable series of specimens.

During the World War 2 years, and the early fifties when I found a new area for H.chaostola, I was able to add a few more specimens to my series, and again in 1965 to 1973. All these specimens are accurately recorded, and labelled in fadeless Indian Ink.

I think it is now safe to say that we know most of the secrets of this rare species. The two Articles on the Australian Skippers, which I wrote for the Latrobe Valley Naturalist, one in December 1972, the other in January 1973 will, I am sure, give my readers a fair idea of the type of habitat favoured by them.

The conditions mostly favoured by them depend on the type of vegetation, (larval food plant and plenty of wild flowers), and the different types of soil, i.e. if alkaline or acid soil.

I always like to look over the known skipper grounds, and try to find new ones, during the Winter months, and to notice the stages of growth of the Skipper larvae. Sometimes ground birds rob the skipper shelters in the Gahnia plants of the larva, and pupa.

Hesperilla chaostola is a Skipper that never wanders far from the breeding grounds. It is a species that always likes to stay "at home", this, and other known factors, make their continued existence very uncertain.

In conclusion I must say a very big Thankyou to my old friend Charlie Elton, for the peerless help, and co-operation he has given me, especially during the past six or seven years. Without his help, and generous assistance, this Article on H.chaostola would not have been possible.

May I also wish the Latrobe Valley Naturalist a prosperous year for 1974.

C.G.L. Gooding.

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NOTE FROM WARRAGUL F.N.C.

Annual subscriptions are now due. Due to the impending increases in the postage of L.V. Naturalist the subscription will be raised to \$3.50 per person or family.

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REPORT OF TRARALGON FIELD NATURALIST CLUB EXCURSION 9th FEBRUARY 1974

The Geology of Cape Patterson area was the subject for the excursion led by Mrs Brewster. The rocks of the cliff and shore platform are of the Jurassic period 160 -180 million years ago.

The first stop was at Point Kruger which is an example of volcanic rock. Here we saw dykes, which are intrusions into softer rocks and cracks, faults, joint planes and weathering. All dykes in the Jurassic rocks are basaltic. The older basalt of Point Kruger is a blue black rock, with fine tuff and igneous rock with small basalt dykes and horizontal columns of basalt. There are intrusions of sandstones and shales which have been carried by the igneous rocks. Some quartz veins were found near the margin of the volcanic neck. They are seldom found in the Jurassic period, but are always associated with dykes or petrified logs. They were probably due to heated water coming up with the dykes which either contained silica or the water dissolved and deposited some of the sand grains.

Further along the coastline from Cape Patterson there is sandstone formation. This is formed from fragments of basic feldspars, a little mica and less than half silica. All the constituents come from the disintegration of other igneous rocks. Here divisional planes run across the rocks in a northerly or northwesterly direction. Long deep channels with smooth parallel and vertical walls are formed by the waves removing the rock between two of the lines of weakness. Outcrops of coal were found. This coal has been formed by the deposition of drifting plants (not in growing position as at Yallourn). There are conglomerate rocks in the area with granite detritus and pebbles of porphyry and Palaeozoic sedimentary rocks. Breccias are common with a variety from very little sand between the stone to sandstone with very few pebbles. A fossilized tree trunk was found in the shore platform.

The Aboriginal Kitchen Middens in the sand dunes were of interest. Here many shells were found, and the occasional sharpened stone which could have been used by the aborigines. The sand dunes have their steeper side on the land side. Wind funnels through them constantly, causing them to change shape and cover and uncover these middens. The lower parts of the older dunes gradually become rock as percolating water gradually dissolves shell fragments, which forms sand grains and together with ferruginous matter becomes cemented into rock.

We stopped at Eagles Nest, a large rock stack with fissure caves along the cliffs. There are petrified tree stumps on rocks below.

Above flat rocks there was a view of the old coastline and more recent dunes. Screw Creek Hill offered a lovely view of the inlet and coastline.

The probable origin of this country was a great lake or estuary stretching from east to west. The basin being bounded on the north by the still exciting highlands and on the south by a land mass of igneous rocks now beneath Bass Strait. It is represented by Cape Woolami (granite) and the palaeozoic rocks of Cape Liptrap and Wilsons Promontary and the islands to the South.

CAPE PATTERSON EXCURSION

contd..

The Cape Patterson series is the oldest of the post Pliocene or recent beds. There is a fringe along both sides of Bass Range with plains slightly raised above the alluvial flats. There are fossil shells in these soils (we found some at Mahers Landing), which are of recent times indicating that the sea probably covered the plain after its deposition.

My thanks to Mrs Brewster for the main content of these notes.

Julie Chitty.

THE STRAITSMAN

Mr Wall was projectionist for the film The Straitsman shown at our January meeting. The film was woven around the life of Victor Hardy who died, in retirement, just before the film was ready for distribution.

For the sake of the film Victor Hardy left Stanley in his boat, travelled around the islands of Bass Strait and to the mainland for the last time. As he visited each area the interesting history of the people who first settled there and other early history was related.

The discovery of Bass Strait and its treacherous seas revealed the courage and fortitude of the early sailors.

Victor Hardy left school at 13 and soon after went to sea. Later he was Mate on the Lady Joan the main supplier for the islanders. He spent his whole life either on boats or on the islands of Bass Strait. King Island has gruesome tales of great loss of life through shipwreck but on one occasion 450 immigrants were saved because the crew managed to get a rope ashore and could therefore pull the lifeboat ashore. 400 ships were reported wrecked in Bass Strait.

In the 1840s the first lighthouse was built. Deal Island has the highest light. Now there are numerous lights all over Bass Strait but it is still a dangerous place to the unwary, despite the benefits of maps, charts and modern communications. There are many mysteries of convicts who disappeared and other mysterious tales.

The story of the Tasmanian aborigines was also told as they are part of the life of Bass Strait.

Although much of the history did not make pleasant telling the Straitsman is a very interesting and informative film.

Bon Thompson.

NOMINATION FORM FOR OFFICE. L.V.F.N.C.

I wish to nominate . . . ; . . . . .  
of . . . . . for the position of . . . . .  
of this club.

Proposer . . . . .  
Seconder . . . . .

I agree to accept nomination for the above office in the club.



REPORT OF BUSINESS MEETING L.V.F.N.C. HELD 19th. FEBRUARY .

Annual Meeting. March 22nd will be annual meeting and election of office bearers.

Vice Presidents ,2 required ; Secretary.

Nomination forms enclosed with this issue of Naturalist.

Photoflora. The Secretary wished to apologise for the error in the date announced for Photoflora. This had been speedily rectified.

Natural History Medallion. Decided that this club support the nomination of Dr Winifred Curtis of Tasmania.

Conservation Council of Victoria. Notice of Annual Meeting received. March 22nd. Subscription of \$10.00 to be paid. Mr Brooks will represent club at this meeting.

Bird Observers Club Ornithological Survey. Requests for copies of any submissions for Tyers, Shady Creek and Thomson river areas.

Cape York Environment Centre. Request for support for QUINKAN NATIONAL PARK Qland.

Asking for letters to be sent to Attorney General, Minister for Environment and Local Member regarding this problem.

Further enquires from Alan W. Carle Director Cape York Environment Centre  
P.O.Box 33 Gordonvale Q. 4865.

National Museum of Victoria. Letter from Curator of Birds requesting information about the distribution , population numbers , habits of birds North and South of the Dividing Range. referred to Miss Christensen to co-ordinate information.

Victoria Conservation Trust Advice from this organisation advising us of their responsibilities. It is a body corporate and has been constituted to acquire, preserve and maintain areas within the State which are ecologically significant or of natural interest or beauty or scientific interest and to encourage and assist in the preservation of wildlife and native plants for public scientific and public educational purposes.

Under the Victoria Conservation Trust Act, the trust is specifically empowered to accept gifts devises and bequests and it is the hope of the trust that as many people as possible who are concerned about our heritage of bush, wilderness, coastal lands and scenic areas and the wildlife that inhabits them will take advantage of this opportunity to contribute to the preservation of the environment.

Extract of letter from Trust.

Next Business Meeting will be held Tuesday 19th March at the Thompsons, Downies Lane , Traralgon South.

Supper Roster March 22nd.

Mrs Wall

Mrs Padfield.

SPECIMEN TABLE FEBRUARY 22nd.

Euc. forrestiana, Euc .platypus, Banksia serrata,  
Acacia pruinosa (Frosty Wattle) Tweedia oxypetalum (butterfly food plant)

The above specimens were kindly displayed by Mrs Lyndon.

Latrobe Valley Naturalist.

Details of contributing clubs are as follows:

Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs I. Peterson

14 Barry Street,

Morwell 3840. Tel. M'11 342129

General Meetings commence at 7.30pm. on the 4th Friday each month  
at the Yallourn State School, YALLOURN.

SALE F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs K. Newnham,

P.O. Box 302

Sale 3850. Tel. Sale 441046

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month  
at the C.W.A. Rooms, Macarthur Street, Sale.

TRARALGON F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Wall

156 Kay Street,

Traralgon. 3844. Tel. T'gon  
741948.

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month at the  
City Council Reception Rooms. TRARALGON.

WARRAGUL F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Brooks

3 Nobel Street,

Warragul, 3820. Tel. W'gul 21563

Meetings commence at 8.00pm. on the 3rd. Friday each month  
at the Albert Street State School, WARRAGUL.

Subscriptions payable to the Honorary Treasurer:

Mrs E. Lubcke,

122a Helen Street,

Morwell. 3840.

If transport is needed on excursions please contact Mrs H. Crane  
Tel. Yallourn 622215

The LATROBE VALLEY NATURALIST is the official publication of the  
Latrobe Valley Field Naturalists' Club. Contributions on any aspect of  
Natural History are invited from members of all clubs  
and should be addressed to:

Honorary Editor (Mrs L. Padfield )  
42 Strzelecki Road,  
Yallourn. 3838.

New Address of Editor

99 CHAMBERLAIN ROAD  
NEWBOROUGH 3828.





APRIL, 1974

ISSUE No. 124.

# *Latrobe Valley Naturalist*



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COMING EVENTS

Traralgon F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday May 3rd

Fungi and its habitat Mrs E. Lyndon

Excursion:

Saturday May 4th.

Morwell Nat. Park or Darlimurla.

Meeting Place:

---

Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday 26th April

"Stratigraphy of South Gippsland"

Speaker:

Mr. Graeme Rowe

Excursion:

Saturday May 4th. (Please note change in date to coincide with low tide)

CAPE LIPTRAP - WALKERVILLE AREA

Meeting Place: to be the Koonwarra fossil field situated on the South Gippsland Highway 3.5 miles west of Meehiyan,  
Meeting at 10.00 am leaving at 10.30am.

---

Warragul F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday 19th April

Mr and Mrs N. Williams

Illustrated talk on Flora of Sydney region.

Excursion:

Sunday 21st April

Contact Secretary for details.

---

CANCELLATION

The excursion which was to have been held at Hazelwood Arboretum has been Cancelled. It was to be held April 21st.

---

L.V.F.N.C. PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT 1973 - 1974.

The Club has maintained a steady progress during the year. The attendance at some excursions and meetings dropped this year while the majority were well attended especially the special meeting to hear Mr. Cliff Beaglehole.

Our campout at Wilson's Promontory in October was a great success. At this campout we were joined and ably entertained by the Geelong Club.

The long weekend at the Bogong High Plains under the leadership of Mr Keith Rogers, was a sightseeing as well as a botanical excursion and the rock formations in the Rocky Valley Dam area alone made the trip worthwhile.

We had for the first time, this year a Christmas Get-together which was a great social success.

The submissions by the Club and by many of our members were of great value in the final assessment of the Rosedale area and in the granting of 26,000 hectares for a proposed National Park in the area.

During the past year the Club has been called upon for assistance by many other organisations re conservation, pollution, roadside reserves and many other items of interest.

The members of the Club have always been friendly and we do hope this attitude will continue.

The executive committee meets monthly and deals with routine business which requires much time and patience.

Our new Secretary has done an efficient and exacting job and the Club is very grateful to her.

The production of the Naturalist is a very specialised work, and appreciation must go to all concerned for a job well done. Unfortunately spiralling costs have forced an increase in the price of the Naturalist.

I would like to thank all members for their help and co-operation during the past year.

Tom Moratti President L.V.F.N.C.

CORRECTION

We have received a correction to the article Page 6 Issue No 123.

The first paragraph should read as follows

" The first stop was at Point Kruger which shows example of well weathered sandstone in the cliff. From here we saw a fine example of a volcanic neck. This is of the older basalt, a blue black rock, with fine tuff and igneous rocks with small basalt dykes and horizontal columns of basalt. There are intrusions " etc etc.

Thankyou Mrs Brewster for your interest.  
Please accept apologies from the editor.



" STRATIGRAPHY OF SOUTH GIPPSLAND".

Stratigraphy is the study of how rocks are laid down and have been moved into their present position.

These notes and accompanying maps on pages 4,5 are provided to provide background information for the April Meeting. You are requested to bring this copy of the Naturalist with you to the meeting and excursion.

Rocks are classified according to their age, which refers to how long they have been in their present form. A table of terms used to describe ages of rocks is printed below. The ages relevant to South Gippsland are marked with an asterisk.

ERA	PERIOD	SUB - PERIOD	million of years duration	million of years since start
CAINOZOIC (70 million years)	QUATERNARY *	RECENT	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$
		PLEISTOCENE	$\frac{2}{4}$	1
	TERTIARY *	PLIOCENE	14	15
		MIOCENE	20	35
		OLIGOCENE	15	50
		Eocene	10	60
		PALAEOCENE	10	70
MEZOZOIC *	CRETACEOUS		50	120
	JURASSIC *		30	150
	TRIASSIC		40	190
PALAEOZOIC (310 million years)	PERMIAN		30	220
	CARBONIFEROUS		60	280
	DEVONIAN *		20	300
	SILURIAN *		50	350
	ORDOVICIAN *		50	400
	CAMBRIAN *		100	500
PRE-CAMBRIAN	PROTEROZOIC		1250	
	ARCHAEOZOIC			
	EDIOIC			1750
	ORIGIN OF EARTH			5000

Rocks are also classified according to the way in which they were made into their present form. Sediments can accumulate on the sea floor, in lakes, swamps and billabongs, and on the flood plains of streams. Often these sediments remain little changed and are referred to as alluvium, sand, clay, lignite (brown coal) and gravels. However, under pressure these sediments can consolidate to form sedimentary rocks such as sandstone, limestone, mudstone and shale.

Rocks which were once a hot liquid and have since cooled are called igneous rocks.

Volcanic rocks have cooled quickly on the surface into small crystals and sometimes exhibit gas bubbles (eg. basalt) .

Rocks which have cooled slowly, deep below the surface, usually into large crystals are called plutonic igneous rocks (eg. the granites of Baw Baw and Wilson's Prom.). which have been exposed by erosion of the rocks which were once above the granite. Gabbro is a plutonic rock unusual for its small crystals and (often) dark colour.

Metamorphic Rocks were originally one of the types of rocks mentioned above, but have been changed by heat, pressure or both.

For example greenstone may have been metamorphosed from the lava of a volcano, or marble from limestone.

The legend of the map Fig 2 on page 5 has not printed clearly and should read down the columns as follows:

Quaternary :	sand, alluvium (unmarked)
Tertiary :	sand, clay, lignite, conglomerate (dots)
Tertiary :	Older Volcanics : olivine, basalt, crininite (inverted V)
Mesozoic :	Felspathic sandstone, mudstone, coal ( open oblique shading)
Assumed Devonian :	Granite. ( Cross )
Siluro-Devonian :	Sandstone, shale, limestone (heavy oblique shading)
Ordovician :	Shale, sandstone .( horizontal shading)

Graeme Rowe.

#### BUTTERFLY CENSUS ADDRESS BY MR. A. REID FEBRUARY 22nd 1974

Mr Reid commenced the talk with an explanation of various methods used to measure butterfly populations from random unbiased samples as opposed to a full census in a controlled static closed area. He explained conditions that can unduly affect the results; for example a tree oozing sap or a group of flowers in bloom, both of which will be a source of attraction to the butterflies and can give a much higher reading.

Mr Reid explained in detail the procedure necessary to ensure that the census is taken in truly random sections of the whole area. He explained random lines, straight -line transects, quadrants, point quarters and other systems that can be used.

The results of periodic census can be used as indicators of change. Change is hard to witness as nature is reasonably static except when big change has occurred.

Mr Reid showed some very excellent butterfly and other insect slides. Each slide was accompanied by an informative commentary. The photography was excellent. We learned of the world migration of the Wanderer and the Cabbage White; how Meadow Argus males emerge 6 weeks before the females so only the strong males remain to mate. The beauty of many of our butterflies was greatly appreciated by virtue of the close-up photography. In many cases both male and female were illustrated to appreciate their differences. Camouflage amongst Moths and other insects was aptly shown. The fascinating eggs of a Lacewing looked more like a group of fine fungi than insect eggs as each was suspended on a fine thread.

Much patience was necessary to obtain these slides of insects; as they unlike plants, do not remain in one position for long.

Bon Thompson.



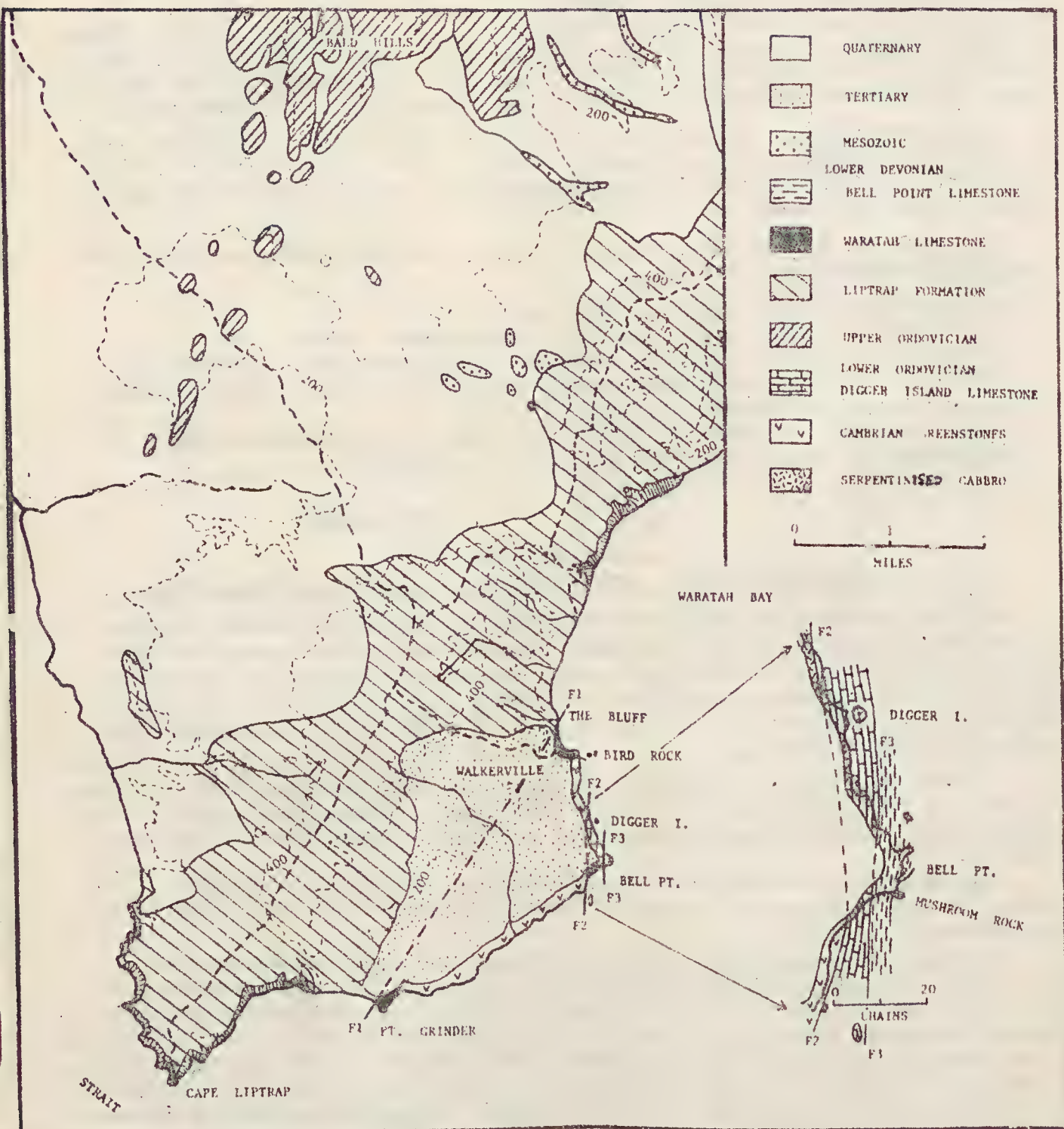


Fig. 1. Geological map of the Cape Liptrap Peninsula (after Ferguson, 1928, and Lindner, 1953).

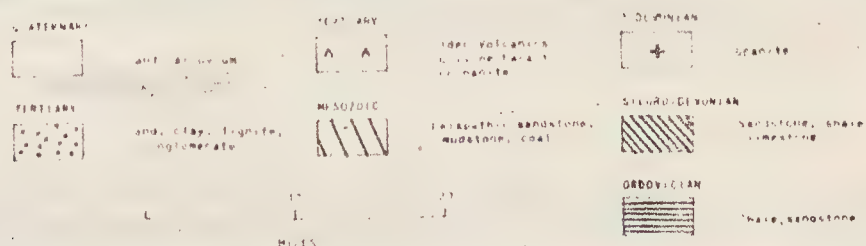


Fig. 2. Geological map of South Gippsland (based on Geological Survey of Victoria 1:250,000 Warragul map sheet).



AFTER CHASING BUTTERFLIES.

After having spent a most enjoyable morning on our L.V.F.N.C. Butterfly excursion, and feeling revived after a leisurely lunch at the Arboreteum, Mr and Mrs Puckey, Mrs Crane, Miss Christensen and I decided to round off the day by visiting what I call "The Old Morwell Bridge Area".

A more unlikely place to find birds and butterflies one could hardly imagine. It is about 2.4Km from Morwell, is adjacent to the Yallourn Open Cut, has high voltage power lines cutting through it, and furthermore also cutting through it is the S.E.C. Yallourn - Morwell Railway line with its constant rattle of coal trucks.

And yet our bird list for the afternoon totalled 27 species, and Mrs Crane was able to add Meadow Argus and Australian Admiral to her morning list of butterflies.

As we approached along the old highway to Yallourn, we stopped at the large water-hole past the farm houses. Heather was provided with two White faced Herons for her B.O.C. list, and we were delighted to see a Black Swan with four babies. Five other species were seen here. Nothing to be seen today on the swampy farm land, nor in the large stand of reeds at the first bridge where last year I saw Tailor Birds, Reed Warblers and two Spotless Crakes.

We turned in under the railway line and were greeted by a family of five Kookaburras. We decided to leave the cars here and walk up the track to the Morwell River. Suddenly there was an ear shattering din that made the coal trucks rattling past sound like Brahms's Lullaby! Well . . . I suppose one can't blame the young Mini-bikers for liking this convenient and secluded spot also.

It was fortunate that we decided to risk the peril of being skittled each time they zoomed past, for when we turned off into a small track that curves down a wooded slope to the river our perseverance was rewarded.

A family of Rufous Whistlers! Three species of Honeyeaters, a Rufous Fantail, a Forest Bronzewing Pigeon, Yellow Robins, Silvereyes, a White-throated Tree-creeper and several other species.

As we left this area with the sound of Mini-bikes echoing in the distance, I felt sad and guilty.

For more than a hundred years - ever since this spot was first used as a changing station for the coaches of Cobb and Co. - it has managed to withstand the encroachment of Man. ( Oh! I forgot to mention the Gravel Pit . . . )

The Thrushes and the Whistlers still call, and the Pardalotes still make their nests. Both the Azure and the Sacred Kingfisher hunt here \_\_\_\_\_. but how long before it must finally and forever be vanquished?

June Lybcke.

---

Friends of Mr George Scanlan will be interested to know that he is now at the Kelston Home for the Blind, Howitt St. Wendouree 3355. Victoria. Many of his friends in Gippsland have been wondering where he is now.

We also believe that he has been in contact with the Ballarat F.N.C. and attended an excursion with them.

---

REPORT OF TRARALGON FIELD NATURALISTS EXCURSION TO SUNDAY ISLAND 3/3/74

It was a very hot day when 40 people undertook a trip to Sunday Island. It was a pleasant 30 minute boat trip to the Island from Port Albert. Sunday Island is 8.5 Km long 1.6 km wide, being approximately 1416.4 Hectares in all.

The Island is owned by a co-operative, the Pama Park Game Reserve. It was purchased for the purpose of preserving the deer population, so that there could be controlled game shooting. The Hog Deer are of main concern; they are native to the area. The Fallow Deer have recently been introduced to the island. Some of the fallow deer were seen in an enclosure as we stepped onto the island. Care is taken in controlling the numbers and distribution of ages and sexes of the deer herd. The exact number of deer on the island is not known. Culling is done by the co-Operative members, each is allowed to shoot one deer each year for sport. The animals are used for scientific purposes to assess the well being of the deer in general. They are weighed, tooth and jaw development noted and stomach and liver contents analysed.

Newly acquired deer are kept in pens for a time, so that they can be checked for any adverse effects that the islands climate, or vegetation may have on them. There are some deer which have a defective congenital marking, they are kept separate so that these defects will not be spread in the herd.

Mr Austin, from the Fisheries and Wildlife department explained the aims of the co-operative to us. In return for being allowed to visit the island we were to record the plants and animals which we found on the island. A complete list is necessary to effectively control the deer and their habitat.

We walked along a track to the deer enclosure, where we saw about a dozen deer of various sizes. Being a very hot day, we did not see any other animals.

The island is mainly covered with Banksia, Eucalypts and Acacias. There is some scrub of dogwood and ferns. There are some low salt marsh flats, and also a fresh water spring, which attracted the birds. We saw some Mountain Thrush, Finches and Honeyeaters. There are Cape Barron Geese on the island, also Black Swans and Kookaburras.

After trudging around a small area of the island, we rested in the shade, or went for a swim before being taken back to the mainland.

Julie Chitty.

---

ANNUAL MEETING

Mrs I. S. Peterson was re-elected to the position of Secretary.

Mr Lubcke and Mr Sterkenburg were elected to the offices of Vice President. There are three Vice presidents for the club.

The meeting voted on the motion of Mr Wall to increase the cost of the Naturalist. This was passed with a majority vote.

Subscriptions are now due and are as follows :

Single Member . . .	\$3.00
Family Membership . . .	\$3.50
Naturalist only . . .	\$2.50

The Treasurer will be pleased to receive your monies at the next meeting.



REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 19TH MARCH 1974.

Conservation Council of Victoria. Decided that we would support the nomination of Mr Charles Anderson to the council. The Secretary had already acted on this.

Welcome Swallow Banding Scheme. Information received from this organisation formed in Tasmania. The scheme is operated through the C.S.I.R.O. division of wildlife research. The object of this project is to find out something about their migratory movements from Tasmania to the mainland. Up till now no Tasmanian banded Welcome Swallow has been picked up on the mainland, or vice versa. As the whole success of this project depends on the return of bands to the CSIRO Canberra, members are asked to keep an extra watch for dead Welcome Swallows. Information received from Mrs. P. Park, CAMPANIA, Tasmania 7202

Photoflora Reported that the evening had been a success. Approximately 110 people attended the showing of slides. It was the first showing of the slides also.

Barbeque at Arboretum. A letter had been received from the Morwell Horticultural Society asking that the meeting be cancelled as for some reason it did not suit them. Decided that they should make any further move for further meetings.

Walkathon through Warrilda. Committee advised that walkathon would be held. Organisers were wanting helpers for this. Members could assist privately but the committee felt that the club was not bound to help.

Decided that we should send a Bon Voyage card to Mr and Mrs Belgraver before their departure for a trip to Holland.

Supper Roster April 26th. Mrs Yerve Mrs Puckey

Next Committee Meeting will be held Tuesday April 23rd at 14 Barry st. Morwell

Excursion May 4th.

10.00 am Meet at Koonwarra fossil field.

10.30 am Depart from fossil field. proceeding to Cape Liptrap

Lunch and afternoon activities will take place near the lime kilns at Walkerville. Sturdy shoes are advisable for the walk at Cape Liptrap; and rubber boots or sandshoes and towel for Walkerville.

Please bring this issue of naturalist with you to excursion.

Notes supplied by Graeme Rowe.

Field Naturalist Clubs Association activities were outlined by Mr Lyndon. Gippsland Clubs were supporting the association. It was generally felt that the idea was good but the difficulty of distance was a problem for clubs in any meetings and excursions arranged.

One of our members Mrs Branson has some seeds of Hardenbergia violacea, plants of Kennedya prostrata, Kangaroo paw if anybody would like them.

Contact Mrs Branson 72 Railway Ave. Yallourn if interested.

Mr and Mrs J. Brooks attended the Natural Resources Conservation League forum held at Burnley School of Horticulture recently. The forum was completed at Albury Wodonga, 30th and 31st March.

Latrobe Valley Naturalist

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Details of contributing clubs are as follows:

Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs I. Peterson  
14 Barry Street,  
Morwell 3840. Tel 342129

General Meetings commence at 7.30pm. on the 4th Friday each month  
at the Yallourn State School, YALLOURN.

---

Sale F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs K. Newnham,  
P.O. Box 302  
Sale 3850 Tel. 441046

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month  
at the C.W.A. Rooms, Macarthur Street SALE.

---

Traralgon F.N.C.:

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Wall  
156 Kay Street,  
Traralgon. 3844. Tel. 741948

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month at the  
City Council Reception Rooms. Traralgon.

---

Warragul F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Brooks  
3 Nobel Street,  
Warragul, 3820 Tel 21563

Meetings commence at 8.00pm. on the 3rd Friday each month  
at the Albert Street State School, WARRAGUL.

---

Subscriptions payable to the Honorary Treasurer:

Mrs E. Lubcke,  
122a Helen Street,  
Morwell. 3840.

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If transport is needed on excursions please contact Mrs Crane  
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Newborough 3828.

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MAY, 1974

ISSUE No. 125.



# Latrobe Valley

Issue No. 125 May 1974

Latrobe Valley Naturalist

## Naturalist



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COMING EVENTS

Warragul F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday 17th May at Millers Factory  
Sutton Street, Warragul

Please note change of venue.

Subject:

Along the Alpine Track with Tim Clark.

Excursion:

Sunday 19th May  
Contact Secretary for details.

---

Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday May 24th

Speaker:

Publicity Officer for Sawmillers Assoc.  
Sawmilling and its Conservation policies.

Excursion:

Saturday May 25th.

Meeting Place:

Parkers Corner 10.00am.

We will be in the Erica area for the day.

---

Traralgon F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday June 7th

Speaker:

Mr W. Gane "Growing Native Plants".

Excursion:

Saturday 8th June to Den of Naigun

Meeting Place:

Victory Park Traralgon 9.00 am.

---

VICTORIAN MALLEE FLORAAddress by Miss Jean Galbraith 22/3/74

The mallee has a most distinctive and interesting flora. Miss Galbraith commenced the address by explaining the adaptations plants use to exist in extreme environments. In rain forests many species have very broad leaves to collect as much light as possible. Mallee plants, coastal and heathland plants all have to overcome restrictive conditions. Even the alpine conditions with the snow frozen on the ground for months are similar to drought conditions as the water is not freely available to the plants.

The slides showed many Mallee plants and Miss Galbraith explained how each had overcome the shortage of water over extended periods. The common Eucalypts of the Mallee have many trunks which grow from ligna tubers that manufacture a growth hormone to enable regrowth. The leaves grow densely in the upper storey with few below, thus restricting evaporation. The understorey is sparsely arranged with Porcupine Grass (Triodia irritans) being the most characteristic of the grass cover. Flowers are very bright in colour because there is plenty of light. Many species of Wattles grow under these conditions. Some perennial plants die down during the hot dry conditions and many plants are annuals, surviving as seeds until the rains start them into growth.

Some of the adaptations of leaves include almost no leaves or only tiny or small leaves, hanging leaves or thick or rolled leaves. All of these minimise evaporation by having little exposed surface for evaporation. Some plants have spines instead of some of their leaves and many have varying degrees of coverings of hairs from silky to woolly or flannel-like, cutting down evaporation by sheltering the stomata (breathing pores) with hairs.

Golden Pennants (Loudonia behrii) display the lack of leaves and intensely colourful flowers. Many of the Acacias have small leaves with often a hairy or mealy covering. The Weeping Pittosporum (P. phillyraeoides) has thick leaves that hang downwards.

The Eremophilas - desert lovers commonly called Emu-Bushes because the Emus eat the berries usually have narrow leaves.

The Mallee has its own species of Mistletoes.

The Daisybushes of this type of country have fine dissected leaves or tiny leaves with dense woolly appearance and the Variable Groundsel (Senecio laetus) is the greatly dissected variation similar to that which we know at Cowwarr.

The Mallee Mintbushes have hairy or scaly leaves as in P. microphylla or very tiny leaves on the Scarlet Mintbush (P. aspalathoides). The bright annuals include the Ham and Egg Daisy (Myriocephalus stuartii) and the colourful Waitzia. The dainty Lambstails and Silvertails die down to a perennial root during the summer. Miss Galbraith showed slides of the distinctive flood plain of the Murray River. The plants usually die down in dry conditions and spring up prolifically after heavy rain or flood. Swainsonias, Murray Lily (Crinum pedunculatum) and Garland Flower (Calostemma) were delightful representatives of the colourful plants of this area.

Finally several plants of the salt pan environment included Ruby Saltbush (Enchylaena tomentosa) with its red berries, Kockias with their colourful winged fruits and, of course, the fleshy Noonflower (Disphyna australe). In all these species the fleshy foliage is a defence against drought, and also against the effect of saline soil.

Bon Thompson.



" BUTTERFLY EXCURSION "

Our February excursion was led by Mr Alan Reid, of A.C.F., with Mr Jack Courtenay directing us to the area's butterfly haunts that he located during his years of butterfly collecting. This outing was of course, a follow-up of Mr Reid's talk on butterflies and various methods of assessing population numbers and types in given areas.

We met at the Hazelwood Arboreteum at 10.00am, on a fine day fairly ideal for our purpose. Here we were 'motivated' to butterfly mindedness by Mr Courtenay's display of the section of his collection that showed the life history stages (larvae, pupae and adults) of several butterflies that frequent the area, all of which he had collected and carefully preserved. The Imperial White (Delias harpalys), Wood White (Delias aganippe), Wanderer (Danaus plexippus) Swordgrass Brown (Thesciphona abeona) 'smallish' Blues (Agynis abotta) - very rare and becoming still rarer, Moonlight Blue (Hypochrysops delicia delos) also very rare, Common Brown (Heteronympha merope merope) and Painted Lady (Vanessa marshawi). He told us that every kind of butterfly has its own wasp parasite.

Then Mr Courtenay led us to Silcock's Hill, where we found the Xenicas (Klug's Xenica and Ringed Xenica) predominating.

Under Mr Reid's direction, we took part in a spot survey and found Geitoneura klugi klugi (Klug's Xenica) to be slightly more numerous.

Small Blues, which are not necessarily blue, but may be various shades of fawn or brown were well in evidence.

The Tea-tree Moth and the Crane Fly, the latter a useful mosquito catcher, were also seen.

The Long-leaved mistletoe in the area would attract some blues, Mr Reid told us. Mistletoe (Anyena pendula) is also the host plant of Imperial Whites and Wood Whites, also Wild Cherry (Eucarpus) in the latter case.

There, we also saw a Lesser Wanderer (Danaus chrysippus petilia) - which Mr Courtenay had never seen thereabout. Skippers (Hesperiidae) were also represented, - a very large family, of which many different ones may be found in one's own garden - usually about low, herby plants. The Grass-dart, one of these, may be observed performing its courting 'dance' in which the male circles around and around the female.

Leaving Silcock's Hill, we went via Colley's Road to Yinnar South and an erstwhile haunt of the Silver Xenica. No Silver Xenicas were seen, but Klug's Xenica and Shouldered Browns were identified.

At Gilberts Road turn-off from the Middle Creek Road an Imperial White butterfly and some Common Browns were seen, but no Silver Xenicas at this, another of their haunts. Mr Reid predicted that they would probably be there about a fortnight later.

.....

Our March excursion covered much of the same ground, this time seeking both butterflies and birds, and led by Miss Heather Christensen.

BUTTERFLY EXCURSION

contd..

At Silcock's Hill we failed to see any Klug's Xenicas; but some Ringed Xenicas were still in evidence, though less plentiful than on our previous visit. Small Blues were still about, and quite a few female Common Browns (Heteronympha merope merope) were seen.

At the Gilbert's Road junction a quick flying butterfly was seen - several of them in fact, but their speedy departure did not permit identification. The Silver Xenica was sought but not seen. The butterfly season was obviously on the wane.

Honor Crane.THE BIRDS AND BUTTERFLY OUTING 23/3/74.

Both the birds and butterflies must have been "on holidays" or visiting as neither were plentiful in the places we stopped at. The day though humid became better later and remained dry in spite of the thunder clouds.

After leaving our meeting place we proceeded to Silcock's Hill which I think proved to be the best stop of the day. Some butterflies were "netted" others were too smart or too high.

The birds seen here were a pair of Olive-backed Orioles (a first sighting for some), Grey Thrush, Red Wattle birds, Welcome Swallows, female Rufous Whistler, Eastern Rosellas, Brown Thornbills and numerous Grey Fantails. Our next stop did not add very much to the list. A Ringtailed Possum shaken from his sleep, a few butterflies, Black bird, Grey Fantail, and Thornbills. Three motor cyclists - from no where, was the best that little patch could produce. I don't know under which heading motor bikes should come but they seem to be part of any bush anywhere these days.

We spent a pleasant time over a "cuppa" at Martin Walker Reserve where the Lewin Honeyeater was heard several times before being seen along with Crimson Rosellas, Yellow Robin, Magpies and of course Thornbills and Grey Fantails.

We next visited Morwell National Park. A large Koala was in a fork of a tree above the car park. During a walk along the Eastern boundary we found a dead mouse-size Yellow-footed Phascogale or Marsupial Mouse, a trail left by a goanna in the dust, White-eared Honeyeaters and Goldfinches.

The total bird species seen for the day, by me was 24 and I heard White Throated Treecreeper, Grey Butcher bird and Golden Whistler.

I think this is the first time I've not seen Blue Wrens on an outing, Did anyone see any? I trust everyone had a pleasant and enjoyable day.

Heather Christensen.

Articles for L.V. Naturalist must be in the hands of the editor no later than June 10th for inclusion in the June issue.



THE STORKS PART 1.

It seems a bit unusual, to write an article about a type of bird which does not exist here in Australia. But there might be in it a lesson, or would I say a warning, which may have great influence on the existence of one or more of our Australian birds.

For more than twenty years I was involved in the study of the storks in Europe. They are one of the most popular birds, and are surrounded by many tales and are blamed for the overpopulation of several countries. However countries where no storks exist like England, Belgium and France, suffer the same population problem. . . . The more you are involved in the study of the storks, the more interesting facts are revealed. The bird banding has shown us many interesting things, for instance the way birds fly from their summer quarters to their winter quarters. North and mainly East Africa are the winter quarters. The birds from Europe go there mainly via Turkey - crossing the Bosphorus. This is the safest route, for in Turkey the stork is a holy bird and so 100 percent protected. A small group of birds go via Italy and Sicily crossing the Mediterranean, and others go via France and Spain crossing near Gibraltar.

The banding of storks had to be stopped, because too many birds on the last route were shot so the bands could be sold as souvenirs. . . but bands have given us a lot of information. They have proved that a bird sometimes goes to Africa via Gibraltar and comes back via the Bosphorus, also that a stork can live to be 24 years old, while the same storks come back to the same nest for many many years. It has also proved, that the young birds usually fly first to the winter quarters and are not shown the way by their parents.

Birdbanders in Australia KEEP GOING with your most important work.

In 1938, when I made a movie about the storks in Holland, there were 52 occupied nests in the province of Friesland. Now in 1973 there is not one nest occupied and storks are only now and again seen in Holland. What happened to them and where have they gone?

Germany and Denmark have always been the centres of the highest stork population. Holland was on the edge with most of the nests in the East and North of the country. England, France and Belgium had none at all. It seems that the storks are shifting more east and also are being reduced in numbers except in Turkey where they seem to be increasing.

In Africa, where they are during the winter, their main food is the grass hopper. It is unnecessary to say, that the grasshoppers are sprayed from the air with D.D.T. to reduce their numbers. The storks have to travel long distances from summer to winter quarters. In earlier times there were no electric overhead wires but now many birds are killed by them. As already mentioned, France and Spain are "no safe" routes because of the hunters.

And then we come back to Holland. The main food for storks in Holland is mice and frogs, little fish, insects etc. Mouse plagues have been reduced by temporarily inundating parts of the country to get rid of the pests for the farmers.

STORKS PART 1 contd...

Would you believe that in 1965 there were very few frogs in Holland ? The pollution of canals and ditches had gone so far that it killed most of the frog population. When we were in Holland in 1971 we visited several places, where we used to swim as boys.

Now we found signs everywhere "Swimming not allowed, Polluted water". The frogs didn't read the signs but died before they got the message. The Government and conservationists have worked hard for several years to improve the conditions and preserve what is left. We were told that the frog population is growing again but they don't expect the storks ever to come back again.

And here is the message :

Pollution and spraying together caused the loss to Holland of a most lovable bird - the white stork. Don't let it happen here with Australian birds.

Bart Storckenburg.

BIRD OBSERVERS DAY OUT.

John and I joined a party of Bird Observers for a visit to the Healesville Sanctuary on Saturday 16th March. It had been specially arranged for beginners and Mr Howard Jarman emphasized this point when we assembled inside the main gates, and told us not to refrain from asking questions. The party was divided into 3 groups and we went with Mrs Turner's party. We walked through all the aviaries and identified the different species of hawks, parrots, pigeons, water birds and others. We also observed many "free" birds in the surrounding trees - yellow robins, rufous fantails and whitenaped honeyeaters. White ibis' nests were numerous in the weeping willows above the water, and most still had young birds in them.

The Sanctuary was looking very fine and well cared for and trees and shrubs planted during recent years are coming on beautifully. We notice more improvements each visit we make.

It was a pleasant evening for our return journey home and we were pleased to be returning, not to Melbourne, but to Warragul where we have a fair sized population of feathered residents in our garden and paddocks around it.

Kathleen Eve.

JOTTINGS

Since writing last, we spent some time walking in the bush near Dalmeny (near Narooma N.S.W.). I've never seen such bush !! Very dense with shrubs and creepers thick amongst the trees - it really was like a great garden and was almost tropical. The bird life was fantastic - hundreds of bellbirds and many other bird calls just going on and on continuously. It sounded like an orchestra of birdcalls all echoing in a great hall. Judy spotted some pied oyster catchers at Mallacoota. We hadn't seen them before. The bird species listed on the trip are now 51.

extract from a letter to one of our members from a member of Benalla F.N.C.



REPORT OF BUSINESS MEETING HELD APRIL 23rd.

Photoflora final details of monies worked out.

Tickets sold \$101.40 after our own expenses and N.P.P.S. expenses were taken out we showed a profit of \$12.70.

SUBSCRIPTIONS are now due

FAMILY	\$ 3.50
Single	\$ 3.00

Unfinancial members will receive notice to this effect in June Naturalist.

Survival Magazine Members may order and pay for copies now.

October Campout . Arrangements have been made with the Geelong F.N.C. to meet with them over the weekend October 12th 13th. More details later.

Printing of Naturalist. This matter was discussed as Mr Sterkenburg is unable to continue this task due to ill health.

Mr Strong has agreed to carry on the printing for us.

Supper Roster May 24th. Mrs Thompson Mrs McElroy

Next Business Meeting will Be held May 21st at the home of Mrs Padfield.  
99 Chamberlain Rd. Newborough.

Programme notes. Please fill in the blank spaces

July 26th. Mr A.Coe "Birds"

August 23rd. Mr Edgar, Forester will speak on Forestry.

November 22nd. Mr Gaulton, S.E.C. Geologist "Geology"

There will also be excursions to follow these meetings , details will be given when arrangements finalised.

BENJAMIN BOYD NATIONAL PARK.

During February this year I visited the Benjamin Boyd National Park, situated on an access road north of Eden N.S.W. There is a small sign marked Pinnacles on the drivers side of Princes Highway. It is a short distance to the cliff top, Take all roads to the right and also turn right at the cliff top where a good turning place is available. From here the top of the Pinnacles can be seen to the right. A track leads down to a magnificent beach which is said to be a paradise for fisherman.

The Pinnacles are formed of sharp edged ridges of sandstone, a deep red on top, and changing colours which turn to white half way down.

Dont forget your colour films if you visit this spot. The area is accessible with all tides. The Park itself is coastal heath with dwarf shrubs of Beard Heath, Hakeas, Native Cypress, Common Heath, Velvet Bush, Rice Flower, Goodenia.

I believe in spring, it is a mass of colour with all the flowers in bloom. There are Wallabies, Kangaroos and Dingoes in the area. Park Rangers keep the reserve neat and clean.

The writer does not recommend the track for caravans as some of it is very rough.

N.Simpson (Warragul F.N.C.)

## Latrobe Valley Naturalist

Details of contributing clubs are as follows:

### Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs I. Peterson  
14 Barry Street,  
Morwell 3840. Tel 342129

General Meetings commence at 7.30pm. on the 4th Friday each month  
at the Yallourn State School, YALLOURN.

### Sale F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs K. Newmham,  
P.O. Box 302  
Sale 3850 Tel. 441046

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month  
at the C.W.A. Rooms, Macarthur Street SALE.

### Traralgon F.N.C.:

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Wall  
156 Kay Street,  
Traralgon. 3844. Tel. 741948

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month at the  
City Council Reception Rooms. Traralgon.

### Warragul F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Brooks  
3 Nobel Street,  
Warragul, 3820 Tel 21563

Meetings commence at 8.00pm. on the 3rd Friday each month  
at the Albert Street State School, WARRAGUL.

Subscriptions payable to the Honorary Treasurer:

Mrs E. Lubcke,  
122a Helen Street,  
Morwell. 3840.

If transport is needed on excursions please contact Mrs Crane  
Tel. 622215.

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Natural History are invited from members of all clubs and should be  
Addressed to:

Honorary Editor (Mrs L. Padfield)  
99 Chamberlain Road,  
Newborough 3828.





JUNE, 1974

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# Latrobe Valley Naturalist



Protect and enjoy

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COMING EVENTS

Warragul F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday June 21st.

Mr P. Vroegop

Aviculture in Conservation

Excursion

Sunday June 23rd.

Contact Secretary for details

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Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday June 28th

Speaker:

Mr Rex Filson "Lichens "

Excursion:

Saturday June 29th

Tyers Boola area . Meeting at Tyers  
at Walhalla Road turnoff.

Leaving at 10.30 am.

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Traralgon F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday 5th July

Members night.

Excursion:

Saturday 6th July.

..Possible boat trip ? ?

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STRATIGRAPHY OF SOUTH GIPPSLAND. Address by Mr G. Rowe 26/4/74

Walkerville is a very good area to view geology in the field. Mr Rowe explained where specimens of the different rocks can be seen and also how the original beds have moved exposing the rocks. To enable members to have some conception of 1 million, as geology involves thinking of millions of years, Mr Rowe explained that 16 cents stacked on top of each other would measure 1 inch. One million cents stacked would therefore measure 5,000 ft. almost 1 mile. If the sediment was laid down at the rate of the thickness of 1 cent in a year then in a million years the sediment would be 5,000 ft. thick.

The oldest rocks in Gippsland are Cambrian Rocks (volcanic in origin) but because they were laid down so early and have been covered so deeply it is not often we see them. These rocks can be seen above the wave-cut platform along the coastline.

The other palaeozoic rocks were laid down under the sea. Then followed a time of mountain building, folding and or uplifting known as the Benambran Orogeny. This was also a time when there was no laying down of sediments.

Then followed another period of sedimentation under the sea with a period of upheaval (Browning Orogeny) during this Lower Devonian period.

After this there were tremendous upheavals with major mountain building; e.g. Wilson's Promontory, Daw Baws, Buffalo, Bass Strait Islands. Faulting and folding and pressure brought the granitic rock closer to the surface.

The following era was Mesozoic. The rocks of this period were laid down under fresh water conditions in lakes, swamps, flood plains, etc. 9,000 ft depth of these rocks are known to exist at Balook. The times of rest during this period when no laying down of sediments occurred are called unconformities.

Mr Rowe dealt with the Tertiary period when conglomerates, clays, lignites, etc. were laid down. Finally he explained the formation of the caves and tunnels in the limestone at Walkerville.

Throughout the talk Mr Rowe showed slides that illustrated the areas where the different rocks can be located, and close-up views of the rocks. He also showed examples of folding, upheavals, faults, etc. in the Walkerville area.

Mr Rowe also brought along to the meeting many specimens of the rocks and other specimens of interest.

(Details of the areas where each type of rocks are found were printed in the April issue of the Naturalist.)

Bon Thompson

Copy for the July issue of L.V. Naturalist should be in the hands of the editor on or before July 8th for inclusion in July issue.



SOME FERNS AND FERN ALLIES.

Scattered over the various terrain of the mountains of East Gippsland are some interesting smaller ferns or fern allies that unless one knows what to look for are easily missed.

At higher elevations a rare and inconspicuous little plant, only a few inches tall is the Moonwort ( Botrychium lunaria ) which belongs to the same family as the widespread Adder's Tongue ( Ophioglossum coriaceum ). A stronghold of the Moonwort appears to be around the headwaters of the Buchan River. Those who were at the campout at Native Dog in January 1970 will remember seeing it on the way to the Cobberas. It is also near where we camped, as well as opposite the Rams Horn close to the Benambra Road. It grows too, at Forlorn Hope Plain, about 9 miles to the south, and is amongst tall Mountain Gums just off the plain. Doubtless this little plant will be in other places also, but may so easily be overlooked. Incidentally at a most interesting talk that Mr Willis recently gave to the Bairnsdale F.N.C. he mentioned that, when abroad, he had seen the same Moonwort as one of the most common plants in Iceland !

The other Botrychium species, the Austral Moonwort ( Botrychium australe ) which though apparently rare and very scattered, is abundant this year on Rocky Plain. I had previously found it there on the north side of the creek, but a few weeks ago, in the company of Mr Willis, we found quantities of it amongst the grass on the south side of the plain. The Austral Moonwort is a more robust plant with the fertile frond attaining a height of one foot or more. A few years ago I first found it at Bully Creek, where on our excursion, we left the cars and took off for the Cobberas. Another plant recently seen is above the road bridge at Native Dog. Both the Moonworts seem to be quite erratic in their appearance, and are not evident in the same place each year.

One of the fern allies that also grows at any elevation up to 4,000 ft, but is seldom found in this district, is the tiny Austral Pillwort ( Pilularia novae-hollandiae ). Cliff Beaughole found it at the N.S.W. border at Covambat, on the Tin Mine Track, and again we saw it in a shallow pool near Forlorn Hope Plain. Next it turned up in a rock pool down in the Snowy River Gorge at an altitude of only 500 ft. The tiny grass-like sterile fronds of this plant look like the spikes of water grasses amongst which it grows and are hard to distinguish.

Another rather similar plant, and also rare in this locality is the Rock Avillwort ( Isoetes humilior ) which grows at the waters edge, or under banks and occurs in a few places along the Little River near our home.

What seems to be one of the rarest plants in this area is the Forked Comb-fern ( Schizaea bifida ). This fern was pointed out to me by Cliff Beaughole. Its single small frond about 4 ins. high was growing in a bare patch on dry stony ground overlooking the Boundary Creek Gorge. Except for Cliff's keen eyes I would almost certainly never have noticed it. Search as I may, I have never found another one.

An unusual plant that grows on cliff faces on the Ballantyne Hills in Suggan Buggan and also in the Little River Gorge, is the Skeleton Fork-fern ( Psilotum nudum ). which juts out from rock crevices appearing like the business end of a straw broom, although actually the stems are branched. It likes dry and hot situations and is of course also known to occur in the Grampians.

FERN ALIIES

contd..

In some of the sandy or silty hollows amongst the tea-tree along the flood bed of the Snowy River may be found small colonies of the Short-fruit Nardoo (Marsilea hirsuta). Its small stems and clover-like leaflets resemble at first glance Oxalis corniculata with which it may easily be missed.

It is only of recent years that the common floating Azolla has appeared as a reddish mass on dams in the Colantipy- vulgulmeranf district. As far as I have noticed, this is the Pacific Azolla (Azolla filiculoides), and one would wonder why it was not always on the various small lakes and lagoons of these basalt tablelands.

Of the Clubmosses, the only one on the higher subalpine portion of these mountains that is at all common is the Mountain Clubmoss (Lycopodium fastigatum). However the Fir Clubmoss L. selago has been found in Moscow Creek in the Cobberas area, whilst other clubmosses occur in the wet forest to the southeast of Gelantipy.

One could well expect that other species of fernlike plants will be found from time to time and which is an incentive for further searching.

Keith Rogers.

EMUS AND OTHER ANIMALS

The first rain for several weeks was beginning to fall as we drove east along the Rosedale -Longford road. We turned right into the tall, mature pine plantation and followed a road to the back of the plantation, where areas were cleared in preparation for planting more pines. On other occasions when we had been in the pines, we had seen emus, but only in the large areas which had been cleared, so we started to scan the cleared areas. After 5-10 minutes we had sighted 2 adults. We moved on further and saw one adult with 20 young ones, all the same size, so we presumed it was a male that had reared 20 young. A fine effort! It was the most young emus we had seen in one group. We saw a total of 67 emus for the days drive, mainly <sup>3</sup>grown.

We also saw 3 Kangaroos, 2 Wallabies, 8 Yellow-tailed black cockatoos and several Bronze-wing Pigeons.

Since then my father has reported seeing 15 Wonga pigeons, singularly, vi thin an hour near Licola, another first for him.

Robyn Keath age 12  
Traralgon F.N.C.

PROGRAMME ALTERATION.

Brigadier Officer will speak on October 25th and lead excursion Oct. 26th.  
Mr J. Willis will speak on September 27th and lead excursion Sept 28th.



MORWELL NATIONAL PARKReport of Traralgon Field Naturalists Excursion 4/5/74

On Friday night 3/5/74 we were treated to a very interesting address on fungi by Mrs Lyndon, who had some very good slides of the various types of fungi found in the area.

On Saturday morning we met at the Morwell National Park on a pleasant sunny day, about 20 people attended. Mrs Lyndon led the party into the park along a track that was worn in many years ago when there was extensive logging in the area. There was an abundance of fungi present, no doubt helped by the recent heavy rains in the area. One of the prettiest was a small patch of Coral Fungi. Along Fosters creek were many Tree Orchids. It was very pleasing to see these plants in such numbers and it is to be hoped as more people visit the park they will not be damaged.

There were signs of a great deal of bird life in the park, all along the track were areas where Lyre Birds had been scratching. Scrub Wrens were very plentiful as were Yellow Robin, Fantails, Honeyeaters and some very noisy Crimson Rosellas. One of the most interesting sightings was that of a Boobook Owl. He sat in a hole about half way up a large Mountain Grey Gum. The Owl stayed there for quite some time before retiring back into his hole, so enabling all to have a good look at him.

We had a very pleasant hour for lunch in the picnic area before going off again in search of fungi. I was assured by Mrs Lyndon that most of the fungi were edible, though I can't say they looked very appealing, I think I'll stick to mushrooms. About 4 O'clock we departed for home very pleased with the days activities.

On venturing back on Sunday afternoon with intentions of spotting some Lyre Birds, was almost run over by of all things a "motor bike".

Didn't see any Lyre Birds ! .

Darryl Holley.

THE FOREST EXCURSION IN MAY

Saturday morning dawned fine but cold in Morwell but some patches of sunlight brightened the way to Erica. Green and copper and grey the bush unrolled beside us as we strove to keep Eric in sight; lightened here and there by the yellowish foliage of the wattles and punctuated by the tall brown heads of the saw sedge tussocks.

The soft shades of the different eucalypts, wild cherry clumps and grey dogwoods, spiked with rich pink heath, made a pleasant picture all the way along. Once in a while, the Sunshine Wattle, rich with bloom, lived up to its name.

The foothills were wreathed in trails of mist as we neared the mountains, and soft dark clouds presaged the rain that began as we gathered at Parker's Corner. With our speakers of the previous evening was the local Forest Officer Mr Gary Looch, who led us out the Thomson Valley road for a few miles, where, well wrapped against the rain, we alighted for a walk along a bush track.

Troups of toadstools bordered the avenue of dripping trees. A beautiful Cortinaria, golden brown throughout, gills and all, was seen in many places during the day, humped and clumped beside the road in close-packed colonies.

THE FOREST EXCURSION IN MAY

contd..

I did not recognise it for a *Cortinarius* until it disgorged its typical golden-brown spores. A very photogenic *Boletus*, its red purple cap and stem contrasting sharply with the strong yellow tubes, was seen along the track here, along with many other gems of the bush.

We soon entered a young forest of tall clean-boled Silvertop with little understory except a few hardy ferns. This country had all been stripped about 70 years ago, when Walhalla was booming and burning wood. Here was a good example of naturally regenerated well managed commercial forest. To the uninitiated, Silvertop always presents a rather dark and gloomy woodland and it always seems to me that this is a place where one might expect to meet the Bunyip of the Aborigines. But the Forester and the Millers seemed well pleased with it and said that each well-shaped trunk would be worth about 90 dollars. Further down the track on a little flat a picnic place is being prepared to let the people see the forest. The original intention had been to take us to the Tarago River Catchment Area, and we were handed some interesting literature describing the forest management within a catchment. However the weather induced our leaders to change their plans. On somewhat reluctant wheels we all proceeded further up into the mists in the direction of Mt Erica.

Once again the bush and the toadstools beckoned us as the long string of cars wended its way up the good gravel road to the car park below the mountain. Now the rain began to fall in earnest and lunch was eaten in closed and somewhat soggy cars.

As conditions outside cleared the crowd stepped boldly forth, the hardy ones heading for the Mushroom Rocks under the Sawmillers guidance, while the more prudent elected to inspect the Forester's walking track to the cascades. The way led down by a graded track, past lichen and mossy rocks, to a rushing stream swollen by winter rain. It was a series of cascades of white water, falling steeply and dashing against great granite boulders.

This was a myrtle-beech and sassafras gully, something like that of South Cascade, a fairylane of trees and moss and fungi, misted by spray and the light rain. Beautiful even on this day; it must be a picture under sunshine, and warrants another visit on a better day. On our return we found a couple of boy scout types had a merry fire blazing in one of the barbecues. This was a well attended excursion and the leaders deserved better weather to demonstrate the beauty and utility of their forests, and our thanks go to the Sawmillers representatives and to the Forest Officer who arranged it.

E. LyndonSPECIMEN TABLE, MAY 24th.

A beautiful display of native flowers was shown by Mrs Lyndon.	
<i>Acacia iteaphylla</i>	<i>Eucalyptus forestiana</i> (fuschia gum)
<i>botrycephala</i>	<i>caesia</i> (nuts)
<i>Banksia ericifolia</i>	<i>Banksia marginata</i>
<i>spinulosa</i>	<i>Correa mannii</i>
<i>Spargis impressa</i> (common heath)	Finger-stall Gum nuts Euc sp ?
<u>Ferns</u> Prickly Tree fern	Rock Felt fern (East Gippsland)
<u>Toadstool</u> <i>Calostoma fuscum</i> .	



REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD MAY 21st 1974.

Decided that the club give a donation of \$5.00 to Yallourn State School Mothers Club. We are using their cups and saucers for suppers.

Mr Bechervaise advised that he would not be able to attend any meeting this year. We will make another approach later on.

Lists of films available from I.C.I. was received . This will be perused more closely when we arrange a film night.

Spare covers for Naturalist have been printed. This will enable the printer to make a few extra copies as last month Mr Branson was 3 copies short for mailing.

Unfinancial members will receive a notice to this effect in the June issue of L.V.Naturalist.

As usual there was an abundance of correspondence dealing with aspects of conservation etc. for consideration. These documents are tabled at general meeting

Details for June meeting and excursion finalised. See front cover for details.

Supper Roster June 28th.

Mrs O'Rielly Mrs Asworth.

Next Committee Meeting will be held Tuesday June 25th. at the home of Mr and Mrs Branson , 72 Railway Ave Yallourn . at 7.30pm. Members welcome at these meetings.

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' GOANNA TRACK '

A story told more recently by my neighbour, Mrs Scott, concerning a holiday with her family at Mallacoota interested me so much that it seemed worth sharing. It happened in February 1974 when they crossed the lake to an inviting little cove, complete with smooth sand for the children and picnic table and seats for the party.

There was a sign ' Goanna Track ' beside a path leading away into the bush. When the picnic was nearly over they noticed a large goanna coming down the track to the beach.

" I'm used to big goannas in the Mallee, " said Mrs Scott, " but this was much the biggest one I have ever seen ". Some of the party were nervous, but I thought he had come looking for food round the picnic ground so I broke up a sandwich and threw pieces to him. He ate as much as I would throw to him.

Half of the party went home and by the time the boat came back for us five more goanna had come down 'Goanna Track'. When we embarked they were all gathered under the table looking for food, just as birds fly down to a deserted picnic ground for crumbs".

It seems to me that if any naturalists spend a holiday at Malacoota, and picnic near GOANNA TRACK someone should take a camera !

J. Galbraith.

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## Latrobe Valley Naturalist

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Details of contributing clubs are as follows:

### Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs I. Peterson  
14 Barry Street,  
Morwell 3840. Tel 342129

General Meetings commence at 7.30pm. on the 4th Friday each month  
at the Yallourn State School, YALLOURN.

---

### Sale F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs K. Newnham,  
P.O. Box 302  
Sale 3850 Tel. 441046

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month  
at the C.W.A. Rooms, Macarthur Street SALE.

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### Traralgon F.N.C.:

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Wall  
156 Kay Street,  
Traralgon. 3844. Tel. 741948

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month at the  
City Council Reception Rooms. Traralgon.

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### Warragul F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Brooks  
3 Nobel Street,  
Warragul, 3820 Tel 21563

Meetings commence at 8.00pm. on the 3rd Friday each month  
at the Albert Street State School, WARRAGUL.

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Subscriptions payable to the Honorary Treasurer:

Mrs E. Lubcke,  
122a Helen Street,  
Morwell. 3840.

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If transport is needed on excursions please contact Mrs Crane  
Tel. 622215.

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The LATROBE VALLEY NATURALIST is the official publication of the  
Latrobe Valley Field Naturalists' Club. Contributions on any aspect of  
Natural History are invited from members of all clubs and should be  
Addressed to:

Honorary Editor (Mrs L. Padfield)  
99 Chamberlain Road,  
Newborough 3828.

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JULY, 1974

ISSUE No. 127.

# Latrobe Valley Naturalist

Protect and enjoy

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Registered at the General Post Office Melbourne for transmission by Post as a Periodical Category B.



COMING EVENTS.

Warragul F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday July 19th.

Speaker:

Mr R.W.Loh Film.

"Down the Wonnangatta"

Excursion:

Sunday 21st July

Contact Secretary for details.

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Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday July 26th.

Speaker:

Mr A. Coe Films of Birds.

Excursion:

Saturday July 27th. Meeting at the  
Peeuwong Caravan Park 10.00am.

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Traralgon F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday August 2nd.

Speaker:

Mrs O. Thompson.

Orchids of the district

Excursion:

To be arranged at meeting.

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CONSERVATION AND THE SAWMILLERS.Address by Mr Moors May 24th 1974

Mr Moors is the Publicity Officer for the Sawmillers' Association and was very pleased to have the opportunity to address the club.

The talk commenced with a short history of the parallel effects of the population and land usage throughout the ages. Although the actual land mass of the world has been constant the usage of it has increased with the increase in population and the development of man from hunter to farmer to industrialist. If the population continues to increase at the present rate then Mr Moors suggested that in 400 years time there will only be about one square yard of earth per person. Today man occupies and utilises all the earth that is practical, that is except where it is too high, too cold, too hot, too wet or too dry. In 15 years time it is estimated that all the good land will be farmed and with intensification of management land use will soon be stabilised. So this is definitely a time for planning.

Mr Moors then spoke of the "Age of Wood" which Sawmillers define as the time which will eventuate when many of the non-renewable resources have been consumed. Forests, and therefore wood, are a renewable resource, half of all the organic materials are contained in forests, one-third in the ocean and the rest in grasslands. Trees can be considered as "air conditioners" and "are the best anti-pollution device yet invented".

Mr Moors defined conservation as the wise use of the earth and its resources. Forests need protection and attention. Eighty years ago people started planting trees and this was the very early beginning of forest conservation.

The anticipated greater need for timber and wood has to be met. In Victoria we have one-third more forests than we had 50 years ago (Mr Moors statement); but the increasing pressures of our forests are also greater. These pressures are in the main for material, wildlife and recreation. Forests are living things and if locked up will return to their primeval state. Biologists say logging and wildlife are compatible; animals can forage more easily in recently harvested areas.

Mr Moors then spoke on the new techniques being explored to decrease wastage in the use of our forests. For example a large "vacuum cleaner" to collect leaves, branches, etc. that are now wasted and burnt.

The possible growth of better trees was discussed. The one most suitable at present is the whipwood, a type of Sycamore that has half the growth pattern of pine. Recycling of paper and other wood products to make building panels, etc., is the one area where science is progressing.

The Sawmillers support the Forest Commission in their methods of silviculture and hope they will continue to control our forests. Finally Mr Moors then showed slides illustrating some of the aspects of the talk use of timber framing in houses and also interior decorations; farming the forest by the Forest Commission and lastly fire protection and fire fighting.

Mr Moors and Mr G. Dwyer answered many questions put by members.

Bon Thompson.



EXCURSION TO CAPE LIPTRAP -- WALKERVILLE AREA MAY 4th. 1974 .

In calm sunny weather the group met high above the Tarwin River at the site of the Koonwarra fossil field. Crumbly soft rock made the search difficult, and although few fish remains were found, numerous small pieces of plant, mostly fern, were uncovered. Here the Tarwin River has rejuvenated to a young V-shaped valley in marked contrast to the broad flood plains both upstream and downstream of this locality.

The general path of the Tarwin River is followed to Tarwin Lower where Anderson's Inlet and the sand dunes of Venus Bay are visible. This locality marks the southernmost limits of the Tertiary sands and clays and the Mesozoic sediments which outcrop in a cliff. This cliff marks the position of a previous coastline in this area.

Mount Liptrap is the highest point on the ridge of the Liptrap formation and commands extensive views of Venus and Waratah Bays, Wilson's Promontory, Corner, Shallow and Anderson's Inlets and the South Gippsland Highlands. The soil here is very sandy and supports Banksia, Sweet Wattle, She-oak, and a clubmoss called Lycopodium growing up to two feet high amongst the ti-tree.

The walk down the steep cliff face at Cape Liptrap taxed paediatric dexterity to the full, but once on the beach the sedimentary rocks of the Liptrap formation are seen to exhibit superb examples of faulting and complex folding patterns. Then for the hard walk back up again. Just as well lunch followed this exercise !

At Bird Rock near Walkerville South, ancient Cambrian greenstone tuffs and lavas may be seen on the wavecut platforms. Above the greenstones and to the north lie the three members of the Waratah limestone series. In the vicinity of the boundary between the greenstones and limestones are a number of stones covered in limonite. This is a dark brown colour and has weathered to produce many spectacular patterned effects. The Bird Rock member of muddy brown limestone contains tunnels, a huge cavern, some collapsed caves, and fossilized coral organisms exposed to weather and wave.

The Lime Kilns on the beach cliff at Walkerville South are a spectacular reminder of activity about the turn of the century to obtain lime from limestone. Walking north from here, the newer two members of the Waratah Limestone series are observed. First the light-coloured Kiln member, then the darker Bluff member which has as its northern boundary a spectacular fault plane. To the north of this fault which passes through The Bluff at Walkerville North are yellow Tertiary sediments with its usual basal layer of large pebbles. These overlie the sharply folded sediments of the Liptrap formation which also outcrops on the wavecut platform north of the Bluff.

Walkerville is an interesting area. It combines many interesting aspects, not only of geology, but also of historic, photographic, botanical and zoological interest. And all this in a picturesque seaside setting. It is anticipated that this excursion will be repeated in December as the final club activity for the year.

Graeme Rowe.

December 14th is the date anticipated for the excursion mentioned. More details will be given later on. Ed.

MEMORIAL TO NORMAN WAKEFIELD.

The Baimsdale F.N.C., supported by the F.N.C.V. has suggested that an East Gippsland National Park be named and dedicated to the memory of Norman Wakefield, and Mr Barton, the Hon. Secretary of the Baimsdale Club suggests that we too might like to support the project and send a submission to that effect to the Land Conservation Council when submissions on E. Gippsland are called for.

Some members of the Baimsdale Club camped at Chandler's Creek bridge at Cann River during the long weekend in June, to investigate the area suggested for the park.

Mr Barton writes " We felt this would be an appropriate memorial to the very fine all round naturalist who spent much time there. It was one of his favourite areas. His widow thinks it a good idea. "

The area we have in mind extends from the Cann River Highway through to Wangarabell and the N.S.W. border. It includes the interesting Mt Kaye, Mt Moregunogin and Mt Coopracambra (about 3,600 ft). It is a good scenic area, with geological and ornithological interest and a great variety of plants, especially on the sandstone along the Genoa River, and includes the 'FOSSIL FOOTPRINTS' which are of great interest. A number of plants have their only Victorian habitat there, and on one hillside Norman discovered several new species of POLYADERES.

There is good timber there but it does not appear to be a good milling area, and there are no houses and there is no grazing as it is very rocky. Our party traversed about 6 miles of the line, easterly, and also some distance along the Yam balla and Mt Kaye tracks. "

Mr Barton listed 103 species of plants identified in the proposed park during the weekend of June 21. There were both rare and beautiful species amongst them although June is a very "off season" for flowers. There was also a list of 23 bird species seen.

Some of our members may recall that a plant till then thought to be confined to Tasmania - the Tasmanian Waxflower ( Eriostemon virgatus ) and two N.S.W. species not previously known in Victoria, or even near the border were recorded on Mt Kaye in 1972.

The N.S.W. species were Lomandra obliqua and Croton verraukii.

The reservation and naming of a National Park is a tribute Norman Wakefield would have appreciated. It embodies those things he valued highly, as Mrs Wakefield does also, and is in the heart of "his" part of East Gippsland.

Jean Galbraith.

A VISITOR AT THE JUNE MEETING.

Those members present at the June meeting of L.V.F.N.C. were most pleased to see in attendance Mr George Scanlan of Ballarat. George was the editor, printer and assembled the Naturalist for several years. We know he was pleased to once again be in the Latrobe Valley renewing friendships of old. He also attended the excursion and was especially delighted to hear the Lyre Birds singing so well during the afternoon.

We hope you can come again to be with us George.



BUSH NEWS FROM LAUNCHING PLACE

We live on a 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  acre block in the beautiful Don Valley near Launching Place. When we bought the block about 6 years ago it had been bulldozed but quite a few very nice trees had been left standing. We decided to let the scrub grow back for the benefit of the many birds and mammals in the area and have never regretted this. We have received great pleasure from living with the neighbouring birds and making a record of over 11 different mammals living on our block. Many times, however, we have wished the block was 500 - 600 acres in extent.

In late November 1971, on returning from a shopping expedition one Saturday morning we rescued a brood of 8 Black Teal ducklings orphaned by some means. We instituted a search for the mother but failed to find her, so we obtained a permit from the Fisheries and Wildlife Department to raise them. We had lots of fun and pleasure doing this. For a while we kept them in a large brooder until they were independent enough to be put on our small lily pond. We decided to do this fairly late one sunny afternoon. How they enjoyed their first taste of freedom, skittering across the lily leaves, diving, swimming and feeding. It was a lovely sight. After a couple of hours we decided that we had better capture them and return them to the brooder. In the meantime, however, my husband noticed a large tiger snake gliding at the top end of the pond, obviously fetched from his hiding place by the noise the ducklings were making. We were petrified that he would snatch one for his supper. We disturbed the snake and eventually it went away. After a while we started to capture the ducklings. This took us over two hours of very hard work indeed, my husband finally catching the last 3 or 4 with his trout landing net. Next evening, when capture time came it was even worse - three hours and three still at large. We decided that as darkness was now rapidly approaching we would leave them out all night. If they were safe in the morning we would allow the other members of the brood to remain on the pond until such time as they were able to fly away. Next morning practically at dawn I ran up to see how they had fared, and there they were quite safe and sound. So after this we allowed them to remain out at night.

It was not long before they were very mature birds and we could see that they were stretching their wings and practising to get ready to fly. One evening, while we had some guests, we went up to see the ducklings and one after the other they took off from the pond. It was wonderful to see them go although we felt very sad. However, later they all returned, much to our delight. Because of hand feeding and their tameness we hoped that one or two would stay with us, but unfortunately this was not to be. Gradually the daily return dropped to one, a female whom we christened Petunia because she looked so lonely by herself. We hoped that perhaps next season one or two of the brood might return, but alas, we were also disappointed in this. Perhaps they had fallen victims to someone's gun. It seemed such a shame that, after all the work we had put in to raising them, this might happen.

One thing we were very interested to note was the plumage of the birds - as they grew the colours seemed to intensify. After they lost their down the pattern was already there although they were still very young birds. It was also interesting to note that the beautiful irridescent peacock blue patch appeared on all the birds, and we did not know how to distinguish the sexes until we were informed that the female had a much more strident quack than the male who had a gentle soft note. After a while it was very plain to see the females of the flock you had only to hear the female quack to know immediately the sex of the bird.

BUSH NEWS FROM LAUNCHING PLACE

contd..

The birds were ready to fly when they were approximately 3 months old. At this stage they looked very nature, strong and healthy. Obviously life in the pond, which was well stocked with snails and lots of other natural foods, and also the supplementary hand feeding kept them in perfect condition. They quickly fouled up the lily pond which turned a horrible shade of green. They also ate every water lily bud as it appeared and left our water lilies in a ragged mess, but the following year these all recovered.

One of the lovely things about the ducklings was the way they they used to walk up to the front door through the scrub in a single file. This happened on the rare occasions when I might be a little late in putting out their food. Strangely enough, on the last evening they spent with us before they flew away, they all came down as we hoped, to say goodbye.

Jan 1974. Petunia (we feel sure) returned with 10 ducklings. They had nested in a tall eucalypt just over the pond, fortunately leaving it just before a gale blew down part of the tree. They stayed away for days, then returned to the pond. One day Petunia and children came to the front door for a feed just as she and her siblings did when they were young. We did not see the family every day but think she moved her brood around in the bush partly for training purposes and partly for protection. They had been seen on the road as well. We have not sighted them for sometime now and fear they might have been taken by a fox which was seen when my husband and a neighbour went looking for them. If any have survived it will be interesting to see whether there will be a new family visiting us next season.

Mrs. Dorrie Thompson.Launching Place

As told to Miss Betty Kemp who compiled the article.

BIRD MOVEMENTS ABOUT HOMEFEBRUARY 1974

Some birds are with us all year, others "pay calls", some longer than others. The Rufous Fantail is one that only lasts a few hours. I did not see it here, but saw it at Galbraiths this year. The Satin Flycatchers visited on the 8th February last year and the 7th Feb. this year. I saw them (a family party) 2 or 3 days. How do they know the date? Scarlet Robins and the White throated Tree-creeper are back - they stay longer. A family of Brown Headed Honeyeaters visit the bird bath, this is the first time I have noticed them in the garden. Seven different species of other Honeyeaters feed at the nectar bottle through the year and Satin Bower-birds when they return.

As winter comes Yellow and Flame Robins, King Parrots and Grey Currawong will appear and with the coming of spring they go, and their place is taken by others. Black-faced Cockoo Shrike, Pallid and Fantail Cuckoos.

The Yellow tailed Black Cockatoos come on odd days and the Gang Gangs compete with the Crimson Rosellas for the berries in the Autumn. Red-browed Finches are here now and the Goldfinch has 2 babies in the plum tree.

Wrens, Thornbills, Grey Fantails, Grey Thrush and Golden Whistler are here most of the year with Magpies, Mudlarks, Kookaburras and the introduced species all the time. Swifts, Hawks, Swans and Pelicans have been seen flying overhead. These are some that come to mind but there are others.

Heather Christensen.



REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD JUNE 25th 1974.

Hoe Tourist Information requesting details of our club.

CC.V. newsletter and report of Annual Meeting received. these documents will be tabled at meetings for members perusal.

Other items dealing with aspects of conservation, for action or otherwise dealt with.

Proposed National Park in East Gippsland. Details on page 3 of naturalist. Lists of plants etc handed to our conservation co-ordinator (Mrs Thompson)

The Secretary asked Mrs Thompson if she would make available her submissions to the various authorities available for members perusal.

This was agreed to, contact Secretary if you wish to see these documents.

Arrangements for excursion given. Details inside front cover.

December excursion with Mr Rowe discussed, decided that December 14th would be a suitable date. Excursion intended to be held in the afternoon and a picnic tea would complete the day.

Next Committee Meeting will be held on Tuesday July 23rd. at the home of Mrs Peterson, 14 Barry St. Morwell.

Supper Roster July 26th.

Mrs Ashworth

Mrs O'Reilly

Notes from Warragul Club

At the meeting held June 21st Mr P.Vroegop gave many interesting facts about aviculture in Australia and in fact the world. Victoria alone has 5000 members and each state prints its own monthly magazine. The society helps in preserving many of the near extinct birds which are being lost forever due to mans progress in this civilisation. Mr Vroegop himself is breeding successfully about 16 different species of parrots, several of them quite rare.

Notes supplied by Mrs Brooks.

SPECIMEN TABLE June 28th.

Mrs Lyndon once again brought many species of native plants grown in her garden and Lyndon Park.

Acacia podalyrifolia (Queensland Silver Wattle)

Acacia myrtifolia (Myrtle Wattle)

Grevillea jephcottii (white)

Grevillea sericea (mauve)

Grevillea buscifolia (grey)

Helichrysum bracteatum "Dargun Hill Monarch "

Westringia sp. Hovea sp.

Fungus Calvatia sp.

Hyccenastrum corium.

Latrobe Valley Naturalist

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Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs I. Peterson  
14 Barry Street,  
Morwell 3840. Tel 342129

General Meetings commence at 7.30pm. on the 4th Friday each month  
at the Yallourn State School, YALLOURN.

Sale F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs K. Newmham,  
P.O. Box 302  
Sale 3850 Tel. 441046

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month  
at the C.W.A. Rooms, Macarthur Street SALE.

Traralgon F.N.C.:

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Wall  
156 Kay Street,  
Traralgon. 3844. Tel. 741948

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month at the  
City Council Reception Rooms. Traralgon.

Warragul F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Brooks  
3 Nobel Street,  
Warragul, 3820 Tel 21563

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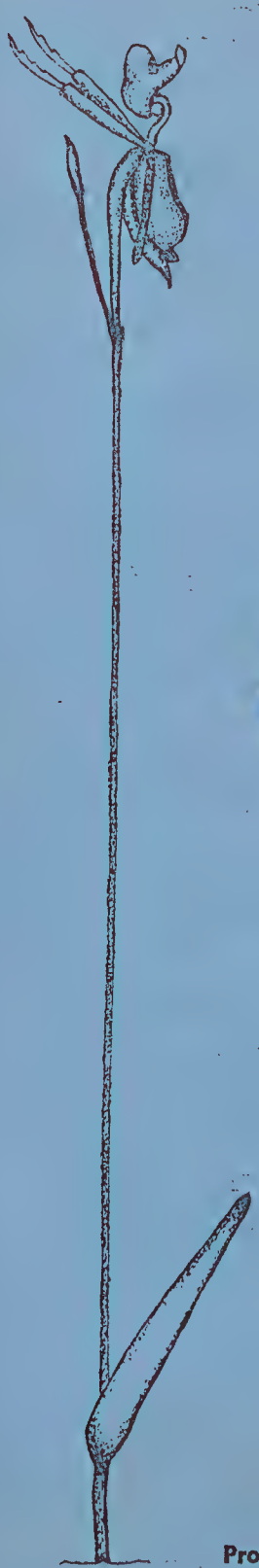
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COMING EVENTS

SALE F.N.C.

MEETING:

SPEAKER:

Friday 6th September

Mrs Lyndon

subject to be decided

EXCURSION:

Leader: Mrs Lyndon.

Contact Secretary for details.

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TRARALGON F.N.C.

MEETING:

Friday 13th September

Annual Meeting and Films.

" What is Ecology "

" Count down Under "

EXCURSION:

Saturday 14th September to Glen Haycock

Meet Victory Park 9.00 am

---

WARRAGUL F.N.C.

MEETING:

Speakers:

SUBJECT:

EXCURSION:

Friday 16th August

Mrs H.Cadby Mr R.Hallett

Recognition of local Gem Stones

Sunday 18th August

Contact Secretary for details

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LATROBE VALLEY F.N.C.

MEETING:

SPEAKER:

EXCURSION:

Friday 23rd August

Mr Edgar (Forest Officer)

Saturday 24th August to Neerim South area

Leaving Forestry Office Neerim South

at 10.00 am.

Dates to remember

September 27th, Talk by Mr J.Willis

October 12th 13th Weekend at Geelong

---

THE STORKS - PART 2

In 1938 I had made a movie about the grey herons, a common bird nesting in big colonies. to do this, I had to build a place in the middle of the colony, when the birds were not there and that was very early in Spring. A mast was erected of over 75 ft. (23 metres) fixed on eight steel cables. A cabin was built at the level of the old nests. Steel footholds screwed on to the mast enabled me to go up or down.

The success of the film was as expected and 1939 I hoped to do the same thing near the storks nest. Storks do not nest like the herons in colonies but singly.

I found a very suitable nest only a few miles from my home. The owners of the nest were quite enthusiastic about my plan, so the big mast plus cabin was transported to the new site in March. Storks start arriving in Holland in April so everything was nicely in time. The old nest of the storks was in a lopped tree about 35 ft. (10.7 metres) high. Behind the nest were willow trees, all bare at this time of the year (as it was winter over there of course). Later on in the year the willows would be in leaf and give a beautiful background for the young storks, growing up in the nest. The cabin was like a mouse trap, easy to get in, but hard to get out! The floor consisted of two small trapdoors, opening inwards. When you were inside there was a comfortable seat, a shelf for cameras and peepholes with flaps to be able to see all round.

To go down, you had to stay with one foot on one trapdoor, open the other door with your other foot and lower that foot on to the steel footstep. Then it was just a matter of being careful that you get the right steps on your way down. Of course there was a quicker way of coming down but I did not prefer that. . . . !

Normally the male stork arrives first on his nest, starts building after a couple of hours, cleaning the nest of grass and leaves, and bringing branches of trees, sometimes one metre or more long. After some days the female arrives and usually their happiness is shown by a very unusual action. They throw their heads backwards on to their backs and make a sound, we call "klepperen". You could make this noise by turning the wheel of a push bike and holding at the same time a stiff piece of cardboard against the turning spokes. After one or two days the birds are mating on the nest and very soon four or five white eggs are produced.

When a male and female bird are on the nest, the only difference between them is that the male is usually a bit bigger and stronger looking. Their white and black feathers, their red beaks and legs and everything else is exactly the same.

Sometimes it happens that the female arrives first. when after some days her mate has not turned up, she might start laying eggs which of course, are not fertile.

When her mate finally comes, they mate, throw the first lot of eggs out and she lays the now fertile lot of eggs.



THE STORKS PART 2 Contd..

Now back to "my" nest as I called it. A most unusual thing happened here. The stork's nest is so big, that in the side of it there was also a sparrow's nest and inside was a duck sitting on her eggs. When the male stork arrived and tried to take possession of his former nest, he was attacked by the duck, defending her eggs. This happened several times. Finally the stork gave up and brought a branch to the top of a nearby chimney. During every fight the duck had lost some of her eggs, so we decided to remove the duck, she could easily find another place for her new nest. A long ladder was produced, the duck removed from her last egg - and a fire lit to make the chimney smoke, in the hope the stork would give up his intention to nest there and come back to his nest. Everything went well and the stork started nestbuilding. So did the duck on the other side of a ditch; later we saw her with a string of little ducklings behind her.

I was now waiting for stork No 2. which turned up after a couple of days, and everything went according to "our" plans, klepperen - mating - laying eggs etc. The female bird was banded with an aluminium band from the Museum Of Natural History Leiden HOLLAND . and then a number of six figures. Unfortunately the ring was mounted upsidedown and there were sixes and nines in it as well. . . Try it for yourself, figures 3.8mm- distance about 7.6 metres with your field glasses. If we knew the number, we would have known where she had been born and banded- but we could not read the number.

Now the most unusual thing happened. During the night, when our female was sitting on her eggs, another female turned up and started a heavy fight. Next morning our girl was still sitting but with bloodstains on her beautiful white feathers. The next night the same story, with the result that our female had disappeared and the new female took possession of the nest. The male did not take part in the fights and seemed to accept his new companion.

What we think is, that the female, belonging to this nest, arrived too late. Her husband met the girl with the ring, and started the family.

The second bird never mated, took complete possession of the nest and eggs and brought up the young birds, as if they were her own. The whole story is on this unusual movie, except the nightly fights. Later we found out, that fights like these often happen during the night.

Eggs are laid every second day; in this case 5 eggs, of which 3 were successfully hatched. Because the bird usually sits on the eggs from the beginning, the eggs hatching at intervals and the difference in size of the young birds is very noticeable.

Hatching usually takes five weeks and the young ones are completely white with pink legs and beaks. After six weeks the young birds try to fly, but do not leave the nest yet. Usually one at a time is exercising and after about three weeks exercises on the nest they take their first real flight.

However they come back to the nest to be fed by their parents. Most of the birds arrive in Holland in April, some even as late as the first days of May.

Most of them gather in big groups during August, we say; ze gaan keppelen ( they go and "keppel" ) How and why a "keppel " starts, we don't know.

We expect that there is one family, perhaps with young ones, joined by another family.

THE STORKS PART 2 contd...

So the group grows to a certain number and they usually stay together for several days, feeding during daytime in paddocks like a group of cattle and during the night they find high spots on roofs of barns, chimneys or other high points, like churches or the wings of windmills.

In 1939, to finish my movie of the storks, I put a request in the papers please to inform me, when a group of storks were seen somewhere. One day I got a message from a place about 40 miles (64 Km) away. With one of my friends on the motor-bike we were on the way within 15 minutes, with two movie cameras over our shoulders. I don't think there was a speed limit then, but if there was, we were sure over it. When we arrived we didn't see one stork so went to our informer and heard that the storks had left in a westerly direction. We thanked him for his work and went west, stopping every five minutes and looking around with the field glasses but nothing was found. In the next village we were told that a big group of storks was seen flying west, so we went further west, but saw no storks, I rang headquarters, that is "home" and a call received there showed that the birds had been seen in a place about 10 miles (16 Km) north of where we were at that moment. So we headed north but without success. The sun was setting and the possibility of a movie dwindling.

We decided to go home, after many unsuccessful miles. That same day at 8 o'clock another message was received, this time from a place far more east. If it was the same group of storks, they had made an enormous circle. They were not settled yet, so I rang back after a couple of hours. The group had settled on farmhouses, trees and other high points.

The only way to catch them this time would be to go there before sunrise and follow them to the place where they were going to feed.

We left at 3.00am. This time we were very successful. We counted about twenty but later on in the morning we were able to get 33 storks in one big group on the movie. It showed us once again... never give up too quickly with birds.

The movie has been shown many times for groups and schools, the track is worn, but will be renewed.

When I made the movie, I did not expect that this movie would in the future would be of historic value, which it certainly is now the storks are gone for good....

Bart Sterkenburg.

BIRD PHOTOGRAPHER. MR COE26/7/74

Mr Coe's interest in birds began about 50 years ago when he was a small boy living on his father's farm at Balliang, situated at the foot of the Brisbane Range and 24 Kilometres south of Bacchus Marsh. He has a great knowledge of the birds of the dry country of his childhood and of Gippsland - also the art of photographing them. He is a member of the Bird Observer's Club and the Warragul Camera Club.

Many of his outstanding colour slides were taken in the Strzelecki area where he has lived for the past 24 years. He has observed 64 species on his farm at Strzelecki - 24 of which have nested there - and another 30 species in the general area outside the farm.



BIRD PHOTOGRAPHER

contd...

Near his home he photographed not only the nest and eggs of the elusive Eastern Whipbird but also the bird sitting on the nest. To his regret these eggs were taken by a predator, he wonders whether it could have been a fox.

A similarity between the Lewin and Yellow-faced Honeyeaters was illustrated by slides of each bird taken in almost identical positions on its nest. Mr Coe was unable to distinguish between male and female parent Lewin, but noted that one parent always brought berries to feed the babies whilst the other always brought insects.

A delightful slide taken in the milk room on the farm showed Mr and Mrs Welcome Swallow and no less than five demanding mouths a-gape in a carefully renovated nest.

We were taken on a photographic tour of some of our lovely National Parks and Sanctuaries including Serendip, Tower Hill, Mt Eccles, the Warrumbungles, Yellingbo and Healesville. Slides of the rare Helmeted Honeyeater nesting at Yellingbo were of particular interest.

All four species of Egret were found breeding on a swamp near Grafton, and a "high-rise flats" effect was captured where these birds were nesting in a large tree.

Nearer home on Dowling's Morass, Royal Spoonbills were looking very regal indeed in their long plumes. A baby Boobook Owl, gazing into the camera with a most reproachful expression, was another subject. A Kookaburra was shown entering a hole in a tree trunk, then emerging with its beak gaping open. Mr Coe has frequently noted Kookaburras making this open-mouthed exit.

Many more excellent slides of birds, nests, eggs and babies were shown - 160 in all.

Mr Coe was thanked for a most interesting evening, and assured that members were looking forward to joining him on the excursion on the following day.

June LubekeSOME PECKINGS IN THE PARK.

When Miss Heather Christensen and I visited the Morwell National Park on 8th February 1974, we found that two picnic tables had been added to the small car park by the bridge. We availed ourselves of them, and as we ate our lunch noticed a Koala high in a eucalypt across the creek. He was perched on a slender outer branch so we guessed that he was feeding.

Soon we saw a couple of White-eared Honeyeaters fly across the creek. They flew up and began to flit around the Koala. He looked back over his shoulder at them, rather as one would regard a troublesome mosquito, then one bird darted in and pecked him on his rump.

They were probably collecting hair for their nest, for White-eared Honeyeaters are keen hair collectors and have been known to alight on human heads.

Later as we walked along the track near the Tree-orchid site some Wrens flew across in front of us, scolding loudly. Scolding, or perhaps giving us a warning, for Heather noticed that their angry chiding was directed toward a Prickly Coprosma bush where, coiled up about four feet above the ground, was a snake.

contd..np5

SOME PECKINGS IN THE PARK contd..

I have since learned that it is not un-common to see a snake at this height and I shudder to think of the times I have brushed through the bushes - keeping a wary eye at my feet !

Some distance further along the track where it widens out for space, there is a small pool of water. Many birds come to this pool and it is here that Heather and I believe we saw the Black-faced Flycatcher -- a rare visitor to this area.

One day as we sat and watched, a wallaby came and drank, raising his head to look at us with soft wondering eyes before casually hopping away; and on another occasion a Goanna ambled up, ignoring me completely. I couldn't see whether he was drinking, but he paused at the edge of the pool for a while before continuing on his way.

A week after the snake incident I returned to the park alone and visited this pool. The water was low and revealed a number of empty drink cans. I removed five from the pool and strained out to reach another, thinking as I did so that if Goannas visited this pool why not snakes ? Just at that moment I felt a fang-like stab on the part of my anatomy that like the Koala's was left unguarded.

I left that spot. I left it rapidly. And when I left, one of my rubber boots stayed behind. When I looked back, a spike of Tussock Rush was nodding in the vacant space above my boot. . .

On this occasion with Heather, near the pool we saw Lewin, Crescent, White-eared and Brown-headed Honeyeaters, a Rufous Fantail, Scrub Wrens, Silver eyes, Red-browed Finches and a Golden Whistler. And not far away were the Golden Bronze Cuckoo and a Satin Flycatcher. We also saw three more Koalas.

As we returned to the car a Crimson Rosella flew into a tall tree carrying in its beak the large dried head of a thistle. It perched on one foot, nibbling daintily at the morsel held in the other, while thistle-down wafted away like bubbles from a pipe.

Our bird list for the Park that day totalled twenty four species.

Back at the car park we found our Koala settled in the customary invulnerable position--- posterior firmly planted in the fork of his tree. Wise fellow.

June Lubcke.

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A NOTE FROM SALE F.N.C.

The programme has at last been finalised .  
Thankyou from all the members of the Sale club to Mr and Mrs Thompson and Mrs Lyndon for the very interesting and enjoyable days excursion to the Morwell National Park. Despite the rain and squalls we had a "beaut" day and learnt quite a lot from them about everything in the area.

Enid Newenham

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REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD JULY 23rd 1974.

There was a great deal of correspondence dealing with conservation matters. These articles are tabled at the general meeting for any member to look at.

Wirilda Committee is now a Corporate Body. We should be hearing more of their activities in the future.

Loy Yang Project. A letter from the State Electricity Commission had been received. This referred to any areas which we might be concerned about in the vicinity of their project. This was discussed and we are keeping a watch on the areas we are concerned about.

The Latrobe Valley Naturalist is to be listed in a journal of periodicals which is published by the National Library Canberra. Details of our publication have been forwarded.

September General Meeting. As we are to have Mr J. Willis as the speaker it was decided to invite members of other clubs in the area to visit us for the evening. Mr Willis is a very interesting speaker and will show slides from the Arctic areas in the summer.

October Campout. We have accepted an invitation from the Geelong F.N.C. to visit their area on the weekend of 12th 13th October. We will visit a reserve at Ocean Grove., and other areas of interest known to geelong members.

Members may camp, stay in hotels, motels as they wish but we would like some indication of your intentions so that we can let the Geelong people know how many people to expect for the weekend. We hope that this will be a pleasant weekend.

Arrangements for the August excursion were given, they are listed on the inside front cover of the Naturalist.

The next Committee meeting will be held at the home of Mr and Mrs Lubcke 122a Helen Street Morwell. on Tuesday August 20th at 7.30pm. All members welcome at these meetings.

Supper Roster August 23rd

Mrs Lubcke

Mr Lubcke

Copy for the September issue of L.V. Naturalist must be in the hands of the editor no later than September 6th 1974.

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THE NORTH EASTERN NATURALIST.

This is a newsletter received from Tasmania each month. It contains much of interest to naturalists. Flinders Island is the subject of one article. This was some impressions gained during a camping tour arranged from Devonport.

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## Latrobe Valley Naturalist

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Details of contributing clubs are as follows:

### Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs I. Peterson  
14 Barry Street,  
Morwell 3840. Tel 342129

General Meetings commence at 7.30pm. on the 4th Friday each month  
at the Yallourn State School, YALLOURN.

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### Sale F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs K. Newnham,  
P.O. Box 302  
Sale 3850 Tel. 441046

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month  
at the C.W.A. Rooms, Macarthur Street SALE.

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### Traralgon F.N.C.:

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Wall  
156 Kay Street,  
Traralgon. 3844. Tel. 741948

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month at the  
City Council Reception Rooms. Traralgon.

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### Warragul F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Brooks  
3 Nobel Street,  
Warragul, 3820 Tel 21563

Meetings commence at 8.00pm. on the 3rd Friday each month  
at the Albert Street State School, WARRAGUL.

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Subscriptions payable to the Honorary Treasurer:

Mrs E. Lubcke,  
122a Helen Street,  
Morwell. 3840.

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If transport is needed on excursions please contact Mrs Crane  
Tel. 622215.

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The LATROBE VALLEY NATURALIST is the official publication of the  
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Addressed to:

Honorary Editor (Mrs L. Padfield)  
99 Chamberlain Road,  
Nowborough 3828.

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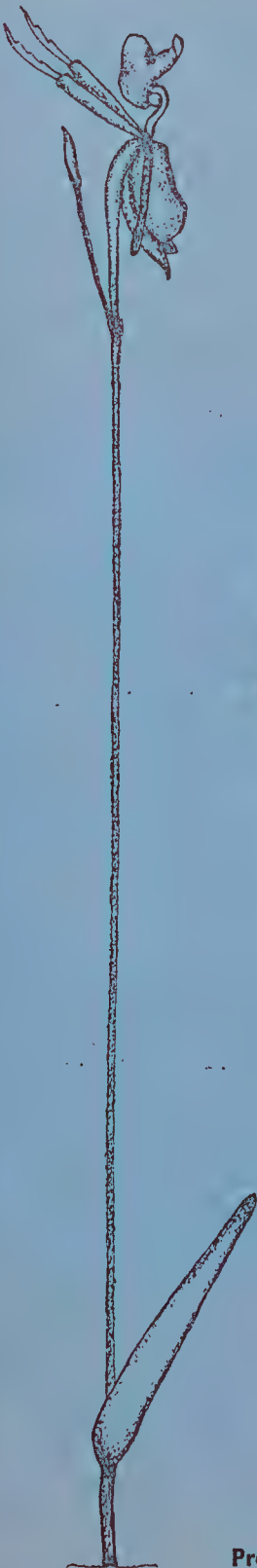




SEPTEMBER, 1974

ISSUE No. 129.

# *Latrobe Valley Naturalist*



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Registered at the General Post Office Melbourne for transmission by Post as a Periodical Category B.



COMING EVENTS

SALE F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday October 4th

Mrs O. Thompson "Orchids"

Excursion:

Sunday 6th October.

further details from Secretary.

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TRARALGON F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday 4th October

Mr D. McKenzie "Environment Protection"

Excursion:

Saturday 5th October

Sperm Whale Head and Loch Sport.

Meet at Victory Park 8.30 am.

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WARRAGUL F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday 20th September

Mr. Bob Vaughn (Forest Officer, Neerim district)

Excursion:

Sunday 22nd September

Contact Secretary for details.

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LATROBE VALLEY F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday 27th September

Dr. J. Willis

"A Naturalist in the Arctic"

Excursion:

Saturday 28th September to Rosedale area.

Leaving Railway Crossing Rosedale at 10.00am

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Special excursion to Geelong October 12th, 13th.

This will include visit to Serendip and Ocean Grove Nature Reserve,  
The You Yangs if time permits.

Australia Day Weekend 1975 will be to Mt Tamboritha using the accomodation  
of St Pauls College Traralgon. Camping also permitted.

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LICHENS.Talk by Mr R. Filson28th June 1974

Mr Filson opened his talk by telling us that he is the only person in Australia at present involved in the study of Lichens. He is called a Lichenologist. There is no evidence of lichens on outer planets, but they are found in almost every habitat that one can think of on this planet.

Most lichens are slow growing. By American measurements growth is about three millimetres per year. Australian lichens are slower growing than this. The warmer climate is thought to have some bearing on their growth. There are some fast growing lichens, these are the Reindeer Mosses of the Northern Hemisphere. These lichens are often mistaken for mosses and are mostly found in the Arctic areas but also found in Britain, mainly on the high Scottish Moors.

There is a special biological makeup in lichens. They are two plants in one, two orders of plants with a balanced relationship (symbiotic). The two plants are a fungus and an algae. The fungus is usually an ascomycete and the algae is a single cell algae.

The name of a lichen follows the name of the fungal component.

There are three types of lichen.

Foliose a leafy lichen, *Parmelia* species.

Fruticose an upright or pendulous lichen, *Gladonia* species.  
Old Mans Beard (*Usnea* sp.) is a fruticose lichen.

Crustose these are small lichens attached very closely to the rocks or trees.

Foliose and Fruticose lichens can be collected with a knife.

Reproduction is by sexual or asexual means. The fruiting body of a lichen is that of the fungus in its makeup.

Lichens as a source of dye was discussed. This is a popular thing at present. The large quantities of lichen needed for dyes sends large numbers of people out collecting lichens. They quickly denude the scenic areas of their beauty. Mr Filson thought that collectors could dye their materials without using lichens. Interesting as it might be using lichens for dyes it is a point to consider.

Identification of lichens is difficult because we are without much literature to help us, especially the unscientific people. Each lichen has a different acid within it, this is a means of identification using chemical tests.

Mr Filson then showed slides which showed the varied habitats of lichens seen by him during a recent trip overseas. The areas ranged from Arctic Mountains to the Antarctic regions.

All members will I am sure be able to look at lichens a little closer after the most interesting talk by Mr Filson.

Lorna Padfield.

Mr Filson has kindly read and corrected the articles written about lichens. He has also said that he enjoyed coming to The Valley to talk and the whole family enjoyed the excursion to Mushroom Rocks.



EXCURSION TO MT ERICAJUNE 29th. 1974.

Saturday morning was bright and clear as we assembled at our meeting place. It had been decided that we should visit Mt Erica and see the lichens there. On hearing this news many people then made sure of adequate petrol supplies and we set out on our way.. We were led through back roads to Parkers Corner and the Thomson Valley Road which would take us to our destination. The mountain was clear and in contrast to our previous visit there, we could see our way along the road.

On arrival at the car park we found the temperature a little cooler than when we had left home. We arrived to a recital from the Lyre Birds in the area much to our delight, the singing went on during the afternoon.

Lunch was next on the agenda to fortify us for the walk along the track to the Mushroom Rocks.

Our leader Mr Filson was able to find many species of lichen for us and demonstrate the different parts of some of them. The three types of lichen were easily seen as we walked along. Many lichens were found on one large rock, some just looked like darkened areas of rock, but on closer investigation we were told these were lichens of the crustose type. A lens was necessary to see the details of these lichens.

One lichen, Stereocaulon ramulosum, had two algae in its composition, one blue and one green. We could clearly see this. The fruiting bodies of some could be seen. A species of Pseudocyphellaria containing blue green algae had yellow soredia( a method of asexual reproduction) on the thallus lobes.

An imperfect lichen called Lepraria was seen, this grows over moss.

It was explained that the difference between moss and lichen is that the moss has leaves and lichen does not have leaves. This was easily seen as we looked through a lens at the plants.

Much time was spent examining the minute parts of lichens, the naked eye could observe some of the phenomena but a lens was useful most times. And of course we were under the watchful eye of our leader who was bombarded with questions during the day.

Slowly we found our way back to the cars and the Lyre Bird singing. Some members took the walk along the track through a Beech Gully to a waterfall.

Our thanks to Mr Filson for a most interesting day.

Lorna Padfield.

TRIP TO POOWONG AND STRZELECKI.

Saturday the 26th July was very wet and dismal on our departure at about 8.30 am. We had heavy rain to Warragul, then light rain to Poowong. On arrival at the camping park at 10.00am the weather cleared, we lit a friendly fire and had a piping hot drink. Our party consisted of fourteen people.

Our leader arrived and we proceeded on foot along the Bena road where we observed two Koala bears in the tree tops. We saw and heard many grey thrushes. The smaller scrub birds were not in their usual flitting from bush to bush mood. The windy weather had an upsetting effect on their usual behaviour, they were seen but not in their usual numbers.

TRIP TO POOWONG AND STRZELECKI

contd...

We did observe a crows nest high in a tree top, there was a pair of crows in the area, so we presumed they were housekeeping.

On our return to our base for lunch the weather remained fine; our leader then suggested we move to the sheltered area known as Wild Dog Creek. On our arrival we parked on the high road and walked 4 kilometres around the edge of the Wild Dog Creek, there were numerous waterfalls and three creeks met to form the main stream.

The rock formations making up the north wall were very steep. Once again the bird life was quiet, although when the sun started to shine they started to show themselves. Numerous species were seen but positive sightings were difficult.

Our out bound walk ended at a very grand gum tree, white with bark hanging everywhere among the limbs. The exact species was not agreed upon.

Our return walk was made up of three parties. Firstly came the hungry and thirsty, next came the bird observers and lastly the hardened naturalists, who observe and discuss everything as they wander.

It was 3.30 pm when we finally all got back to the cars, and ate and drank then followed the usual discussion, all agreed we must return in the spring.

What earlier seemed might be a disappointing day (due to the weather) turned into a very successful and happy outing. After thanking our leader Mr Coe, we all headed home at 4.15 pm.

Tom Moretti.BOOK REVIEW      WILDLIFE CONSERVATION by H.J. Frith.

Publisher Angus and Robertson (\$12.50)      Published 21st March 1974  
380 pages, 60 plates.

There are many books on conservation these days. Most of them are good, some very good, but this one by Dr Frith is outstanding in its comprehensive and balanced approach, dealing first with all the Australian wild life from amphibians to mammals, their habitats, present abundance - or otherwise, and the factors most likely to have caused their increase or decline. Next equally comprehensive, is a chapter on habitats, the longest in the book, understandably, for it deals with that which is basic to all wild life conservation and describes all vegetation formations from rain forest to wetlands, geological formations, habitat alterations resulting from grazing, clearing, mining, various forms of pollution etc. This is illustrated by 32 black and white plates - reproductions of 56 most graphic photographs.

No other book I have read faces so comprehensively and objectively the position of Australian wildlife today, the problems associated with its conservation, and some solutions, although the author is too experienced to be dogmatic about solutions when, as all too often, not enough relevant facts are known to give a complete picture.

contd.. pp4



BOOK REVIEW contd..

In his preface Dr Frith says "There is an immediate need . . . to realise what is happening to the wildlife, and to develop a national policy to hold the ground at least. The first need is to realise what does constitute Wild Life Conservation and to set practicable targets . . . The various groups that have the strongest interest in the subject stand apart from one another and often do not realise how similar are their separate aims".

At the conclusion of his introduction Dr Frith says "Conservation is the one big task. Perhaps one step towards a national conservation plan will be the consolidation of some of the relevant information on vegetation, amphibia, reptiles, birds and mammals, and the identification of some of the things that affect their numbers. This is what is attempted in this book".

It is attempted and achieved so effectively that no review can do more than touch on its outlines. One does not usually need to read every word of a book before reviewing it - but this book is so close knit - each part of the picture of wildlife in its environment is amazingly comprehensive. The habitats and species inhabiting them; their use and abuse, their dangers and advantages are all described as clearly as modern knowledge makes possible.

I should like to quote the "summing up" in the last chapter. That cannot be done so I quote a few fragments hoping many will be encouraged to read the whole. "Much has disappeared from large areas . . . some specimens gone forever . . . Powerful competitors have been acclimatized . . . Land use trends inimical to much of what remains have been set in motion and could hardly be reversed. Nevertheless there is much to be thankful for. Most animal and plant groups have survived into the present era of greater public awareness of the need to conserve natural resources . . . Although most of the habitats have been chopped about they are still, mostly there . . . There is still the opportunity to work with the whole system instead of scrabbling about in a few fragments . . . Should there be the will to secure the knowledge and the will to apply it there is still time to develop an effective conservation plan - not much time, but probably enough . . . Compared with most of the world Australia is in a favourable position with regard to wildlife conservation. The worst effects of the environmental crisis have not reached us yet . . . The habitats still exist, albeit modified, over some very large areas . . . and the wild life in this continent is certainly worth saving. It is true that there are deficiencies in the machinery, but nevertheless know enough to get on with the job right now."

This is no more than a skeleton picture of the book and its summing up - and a very incomplete skeleton too. The book is worth study by all interested in saving our wildlife and the habitat essential to its survival, and managing both constructively.

Jean Galbraith.

LABERTOUCHE EXCURSION

24/8/74

The day was very pleasant as we gathered at the Neerim South Forestry Office. The Neerim District Forestry Officer, Mr Vaugh gave us an address on the work of a Forestry Officer, discussing the decision making necessary after all the information has been collected in the field. The job has then to be supervised right through until the area is ready for regeneration or planting and then left till the trees mature again. The area covered by the Neerim district was shown in a satellite photograph which was in the possession of Mr Vaugh.

Mr Edgar then led the seven cars present into the Labertouche Forest. Stops were made at the three wildflower reserves with lunch at the Gentle Annie Gap. Ten species of wattles were flowering on the trip and several other native plants including Boronia muelleri, Dampiera stricta, Choretrum pauciflorum, Dusty Miller, the green form of Correa reflexa, Silky Hakea, Handsome Flatpea and the Bundled Guineaflower.

The reclamation of a disused sandpit by planting Eucalypts showed present day concern and approach to our forests.

After lunch Mr Edgar pointed out Mountain Ash stands that had regenerated after the 1926 and 1939 fires. There was also an area of young trees regenerated after recent clearing. Recently an area of Shining Gums has been planted in the Gentle Annie district.

An example of a water catchment with the surrounding undisturbed reserve was Pedersen Weir on the Tarago River which provides some of the Water Supply for Warragul. After leaving the Weir the water roars through a rocky ravine and on to several large dams.

As the day was so clear, many beautiful views were visible with the snow on the distant mountains.

A number of birds were identified for the day, especially at the lunch spot.

The weather, the company and the leader all combined to make the excursion a very enjoyable one.

Bon Thompson.

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Life Member Mr George Scanlan.

On 28th August 1970 Mr George Scanlan was made a life member of the Latrobe Valley Field Naturalist Club. Since then he has not been able to be at our meetings regularly and we were not able to present him with his certificate. Friday 23rd August 1974 gave us the opportunity to rectify this situation, as Mr Moretti spoke of the work George had done in starting the L.V. Naturalist. Some earlier copies were on display for the interest of members. Mr Scanlan said he was very proud to be a life member and would treasure his certificate which had been very well presented.

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REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AUGUST 20th 1974 .

September Meeting would be attended by Doctor J. Willis. Other clubs in the area have been invited to attend. As this is to be a special evening ladies are requested to bring a plate .

Supper Roster

Mrs Padfield. Miss Galbraith

Identification of specimens at National Herbarium.

It was with dismay that we learned of the charges to be applied for the identification of plants. Several letters had been received regarding this matter. Letters would be written to the Minister for Conservation and Lands (Mr Borthwick) asking if some alternative arrangements can be made for clubs such as ours.

Minutes of F.N.C.A. received

Life Membership Certificate to be presented to Mr George Scanlan who would be attending the August Meeting.

Softwood Forestry Agreements Act.

Mrs Thompson our Conservation Coordinator has sent a submission on behalf of the Club to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment and Conservation. This is an inquiry into the Forestry and Softwood Timber Industry in relation to the Softwood Forestry Agreements Acts 1967 and 1972.

These submissions are available for members to see at any time. We are all very grateful to Mrs Thompson for her interest in these matters.

Alpine Campout 1975 . This will be to Mt Tamboritha. Camping and accomodation available. Members wishing to be in the buildings please give names to Secretary as soon as possible. There are two buildings one for males , one for females. A charge of \$2.00 per person will be made, no charge for children.

Weekend at Geelong. More details received from Geelong F.N.C.

Decided that members attending to make own arrangements about accomodation.

Mrs Peterson has details of camping areas, Motels etc.

General Programme. October 12th Meet at entrance to serendip 2.30pm.

You Yangs if time permits to see tree planting and infestation of Boneseed.

7.30pm. Meet at Hall for entertainment (Slides, films, talks )

Sunday 13th Meet 9.00 at Post Office to visit Ocean Grove

This is as much information to hand at present.

Next Committee Meeting will be held Tuesday 24th September at the home of

Mrs Padfield, 99 Chamberlain Road, Newborough.

All members interested are welcome at these meetings.

It was with regret that we heard of the tragic death of one of our members. Mrs Joan Ashworth was drowned on August 27th. She will be remembered by the people attending the Labertouche Excursion.

Our thoughts go to her husband and family

Latrobe Valley Naturalist

Details of contributing clubs are as follows:

Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs I. Peterson  
14 Barry Street,  
Morwell 3840. Tel 342129

General Meetings commence at 7.30pm. on the 4th Friday each month  
at the Yallourn State School, YALLOURN.

Sale F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs K. Newnham,  
P.O. Box 302  
Sale 3850 Tel. 441046

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month  
at the C.W.A. Rooms, Macarthur Street SALE.

Traralgon F.N.C.:

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Wall  
156 Kay Street,  
Traralgon. 3844. Tel. 741948

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month at the  
City Council Reception Rooms. Traralgon.

Warragul F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Brooks  
3 Nobel Street,  
Warragul, 3820 Tel 21563

Meetings commence at 8.00pm. on the 3rd Friday each month  
at the Albert Street State School, WARRAGUL.

Subscriptions payable to the Honorary Treasurer:

Mrs E. Lubcke,  
122a Helen Street,  
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OCTOBER, 1974

ISSUE No. 130.

# Latrobe Valley Naturalist



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COMING EVENTS

SALE F.N.C.

Meeting:

Speaker:

Excursion:

Friday 1st November

Mr A. Morrison "Through the Kimberleys"

Leader, Mr Morrison.

Phone Sale 441406 for details.

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TRARALGON F.N.C.

No meeting in November

Weekend Campout at Wilson's Promontary

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LATROBE VALLEY F.N.C.

Meeting:

Speaker:

Excursion:

Meeting Place:

Friday October 25th

Brigadier Hugh Officer "Birds"

Saturday 26th October, Brig. Officer will attend.

Catholic Church, Commercial Rd. Morwell  
at 10.00 am.

Venue for excursion undecided, depends on the weather and wetness of areas thought of.

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WARRAGUL F.N.C.

Meeting:

Speaker:

Excursion:

Excursion:

Friday October 18th

Mr Elwood, Soil Conservation Authority.

Sunday October 20th

Meet at Lang Lang Post Office 10.00am

Sunday 17th November to Labertouche.

Meeting with F.N.C.V.

Members of all clubs welcome to join in.

Contact Secretary for details or refer

to November issue of L.V. Naturalist.

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FOREST COMMISSION POLICIESAddress by Mr Edgar, August 23rd 1974

Mr Edgar spoke on the history of the Forest Commission. 1907 saw the first Forest Act to ensure the correct protection, management and use of the State's Forests. In 1918 a new Forests Act provided for the reconstruction of the Forest Department and the establishment of the Forest Commission. Mr Edgar explained the act and the powers and duties of the Forest Commission as detailed in the Act. These were divided into 8 main sections including protection, management, fire protection, utilization, sale of trees and timber, training personnel and recreation facilities.

The overriding policy accepted by the Commission is multiple use of forests which may be defined as planned management of forest resource to satisfy the many cultural, commercial and environmental needs of the community.

Multiple use means that each possible priority is entitled to be considered when decisions are being made. One zone may be managed to produce a primary use with one or more secondary uses, while another may require management to safeguard two or more uses of equal importance.

Mr Edgar explained the forest management of the Grampians where the overriding major aim is the water supply with primitive areas, natural zones, hardwood timber production zones and grazing zones all within the concept.

Community needs from the forests can change as exemplified by the fact that after the war 30 years ago timber was the main need of the community for housing while now the emphasis is more for providing a balanced environment for man.

Mr Edgar then detailed the different demands on the forests -- Wood, water recreation, wildlife and forage.

Wood -- in the form of logs is 70% by volume; poles, piles and posts is 5% and logs which are chipped for newsprint, particleboard, hardwood board and softwood board takes up 25% of the volume of industrial wood taken from Australian forests.

Water -- a well managed forest is a particularly efficient water catchment.

Recreation -- Forests provide the opportunity for a wide range of recreational activities ranging from the active pursuits of hiking, skiing and picnicking to the more passive enjoyments based on preservation of interesting ecological associations, historical and scenic attractions and wilderness. They offer a place where people can relax and relieve the tensions of modern living.

Wildlife -- In general the greater the range of species, age and characteristics of trees within a forest the greater the variety of mammals, birds and reptiles.

Forage -- is food and in the Forestry context means food for bees and domestic animals. Controlled grazing with restrictions on the number of animals and where they graze is a forest use which can be quite compatible with other forest values and which is of significant economic benefit to the community in the River Red Gum Forest of the Murray River. Beekeeping in Australia differs from some overseas practice in that it is largely dependent on forest flora. Apiarists have developed a virile honey industry by following the seasonal flowering of forest trees and shrubs across the country.



FOREST COMMISSION POLICIES

contd..

Mr Edgar then showed a series of slides which illustrated the multiple uses in forests. Many of the different Eucalypt forests of Victoria were shown including the Barmah Forest on the Murray. Catchment areas, mustering in the Barmah Forest, Eucalyptus oil distilling at Rushworth, animals and birds, road making and fire protection were some of the activities covered.

Mr Edgar then answered questions put to him. Only a few questions were asked because the policies and aims of the Forest Commission had been so well covered in the address.

Bon Thompson.NATIONAL PARKS.

After reading an article in the National Geographic magazine I am prompted to make a comparison with the national parks in England and Wales and Victoria.

The first point noted by me was that in England the parks are measured in square miles and not acres (or hectares now) as we do.

The total acreage of England and Wales is 37million 342 thousand and 80 acres, a smaller area by far than Victoria which has an area of 56 million 284 thousand and 60 acres.

In Victoria there are 23 National Parks with a total area of 506,531 acres. There are 33 wildlife reserves making a total area of 128,811 acres combining to a grand total of 635,342 acres.

Compared with England and Wales in which there are 10 National Parks listed as follows.

<u>Square Miles</u>	<u>Park</u>	<u>Acres</u>
398	Northumberland	254,720
866	Lake District	554,240
680	Yorkshire Dales	435,200
553	North York Moors	341,120
542	Peak District	346,880
845	Snowdonia	540,800
225	Pembrokeshire Coast	144,000
519	Brecon Beacons	332,160
265	Exmoor	169,600
365	Dartmoor	233,600
	Total area in acres	<u>3,352,320</u>

I must admit that there has been a vast amount of work in increasing National Parks since 1970 but we are still a long way behind.

Tom Moretti

## AT THE WARRUMBUNGLES IN SPRING (September 1973)

## Extracts from a letter from May Galbraith.

The flowers are very abundant and lovely. The best place we have seen so far is just near Canyon Camp in the strip of bush between a big rock and the road in. There is still wattle everywhere, many sorts all different from any we know. The one at its best now is a tree like Golden Wattle but with large catkins in groups near the tips of the branches. (Acacia cunninghamii). I am not worrying about knowing the species if I know the family, and I know most of them. There are two Casuarinas and two Swainsonias and several species of Scaevola or Dampiera. If you walked up to the big rock you could almost think you were at the Yacht rock near Looe as the blue-lily and Micromyrtus are so abundant and in full bloom. There is a very pretty mauve Prostanthera probably P. leichardtii with flowers dotted singly on small bright green bushes. Guinea-flowers are just at their best, covered in flowers and bright brown buds; probably H. nitida, they are everywhere. There are several species of Goodenia and lots more. The Fringe-myrtle is the best we have ever seen.

Birds are a continual joy round the camp and everywhere we go. We are camped very near the creek which is shaded by very large Casuarinas.

Today we drove to Pincham Gully and walked to the Bread-knife. It was hot and tiring but the most wonderful walk for flowers, ferns, rocks, water and birds that I've ever done.

We added 10 birds to our list and found two nests with the birds on them - a Dusky Woodswallow's on top of a dry tree, and a Willie Wagtail's. That makes 50 species of birds on our list, and 10 nests.

The Sun Orchids are just perfect - dozens and dozens of them, many blue or pinky mauve with 8 or 10 flowers on one stem, and there are Spider-orchids by the hundred. We also saw Glossopside major, Pink Fingers, Swan Greenhoods, one Scented Leek Orchid, Polyploc Orchids and Dumalis palachila. There are two sorts of pink Begonioides a very large deep-coloured Polyploc, and whole hill sides of a dainty grassy Polyploc (Polyploc).

One whole hillside was covered with maidenhair with fronds fringing every rock and sp. raving over the path and continuing down to the water's edge.

We followed Spicers Creek; there were about 20 creek crossings. The wild violets (Polyploc) were the biggest and prettiest (bright mauve with fine darker lines on two lower petals) we have ever seen. The stems were a foot high and the flowers like large garden violets, and grew in hundreds in the grass on both sides of the creek, amongst huge shining buttercups on stems a foot high. There were thousands of Bulbine Lilies and a dwarf Bulbine Lily possibly B. combarbata with flowers only as big as Yellow Stars. There is yellow Phacelia (Asterolasia hexopetala) here. There is a yellow Phacelia here and a large white flowered shrub which may not be Phacelia (Asterolasia hexopetala). The beautiful Hovea is in seed but we could not find it all. There was quite a bit of Hardenbergia still out, and cream Clematis (Calamophylla) everywhere.



AT THE WARRUMBUNGLES IN SPRING

contd..

Yesterday we watched a white-plumed Honeyeater weaving her dainty cradle in a wreath of Clematis bloom on top of a large stump. I've never found so many bird's nests before, but in spring so many birds you watch are carrying something and you have only to watch them and see where they go to find the nest.

Yesterday I walked up the hill here at camp and a Peaceful Dove flew up with a whirr and settled on an Ironbark. I watched it with the glasses, but as soon as it moved it was invisible with the naked eye and I had to follow along each branch with the field glasses till I found it again. Once I lost it for a long time, and when I picked it up again I saw it was sitting on its nest, perfectly merged into the grey limb - a masterpiece of camouflage. The soft grey dove, with barred throat spread over the nest, and the gum leaves moving in the light breeze to make patterns across her and the limb, exactly matched the black and fawn markings on her back. I could even see her bright little eyes, she closed them after a while and preened herself so I know she had no idea I was still watching her.

We have a bird and plant list for the Warrumbungles National Park, given to us by the Ranger, and all birds who nest here are marked with N. There is no N. by Peaceful Dove, but there should be. When I walked down the hill I saw a little parrot fly to a dry tree and stay only a moment, but long enough for me to see blue cheeks and wing and be fairly certain it was a Turquoise Parrot, so that was an exciting little walk.

BIRDS - As seen from my kitchen window.

Attached to the frame at one side of the window is a water-bottle supplied with perch, to the other side, a nectar bottle - also with perch.

The nectar bottle's most regular visitors are Red Wattlebirds. Apparently one of these wattlebirds has discovered that the shake caused by its landing on the nectar-bottle perch increases the flow of nectar into the holed container from which it drinks - an accidental discovery, I imagine, but that 'bird of no brain' (I believe it is said) was certainly capable of realizing the benefit gained from that action.

Now, as for some weeks past, this wily bird, when apparently finding the nectar flow to be 'easing off', pushes off to the 45 inch distant water-bottle perch, lands, turns around and immediately returns to the nectar bottle.

As this is done at very short intervals over the duration of the visit to the nectar bottle, it is obviously a deliberate manoeuvre. Sometimes the intermittent thud, thud, thud caused by the return landing greets me on waking, it is heard off and on throughout the day, and is observed as I work at the sink that faces the window. Unless I make a very sudden or extra-close-to-the-window movement, my activities do not seem to disturb the ritual.

About four feet out from this window, there is a roofed feeding tray suspended at height that allows convenient reach for replenishment and clear observation from within the room, but no danger from cats. It and the two bottles are on about the same level.

contd..pp5

BIRDS

contd..

At baby-feeding time about three years ago, I was washing up just inside the window with one eye on a mother feeding a baby wattletbird - the latter on the feeding tray, and Mother going back and forth between it and the 4 foot distant nectar bottle, over and over again - until it suddenly occurred to me to count her trips.

Believe it or not, I counted sixty return trips within 15 minutes( excluding those before the count started); then Mother flew off, leaving Baby apparently half dozing on the tray.... but only for a very few minutes, then it began to ask for more food !!!

Mother returned, resumed her trips to and fro from the bottle, and again I counted sixty in approximately the same period of time. Then she flew beyond my ken; but Baby remained, again only satisfied for a few moments.

As I had to go out, I had to leave Mother's third session of return trips still going on, only partly counted.

It was interesting to note that most of her turns were clock-wise, but every now and then she would make a series of three or four in the opposite direction - apparently to counteract giddiness.

A day or two later, Baby was again seen being fed, this time by Dad; but Dad had the job down to a fine art. whereas Mum's action was 'to bottle, sip, return; feed' over and over again. Dad's was 'to bottle, sip, sip, sip(3 or 4 times), return, feed, feed, feed, and so on - a much more leisurely operation, but seemingly just as effective from Baby's point of view.

As far as I can recall, I left them to it, so do not know how many trips Dad made; but apparently human youngsters aren't the only ones that take a lot of filling - perhaps, indeed, we human parents should begin to count our comparative blessings.

I can't guarantee the sex of either parent mentioned, but am convinced that I am not mistaken( was even more so at the time). Definately, at least, two different parent birds were involved.

Honor Crane.

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More about Babies.

According to an article by Paul A. Zahl, Ph.D. National Geographic Senior Staff, a six pound human baby that grew at the same rate as the Wanderer Butterfly caterpillar would weigh eight tons in two weeks.

From personal experience of the caterpillars food-consumption habits, one wonders whether the human parents could keep up their baby's comparative supply, even though both working full time at the task.

H. Crane.



REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD SEPTEMBER 24th 1974 .

The usual large amount of correspondence from Societies interested in Conservation had been received. This is available for members perusal.

Norman Wakefield Scientific Reserve .

Submissions now being sent to Land Conservation Council. The Latrobe Valley Club will support the submission sent by Baimsdale F.N.C. Private submissions may be sent also. The suggested reserve is contained in the Genoa block of the East Gippsland Study Area. An article referring to this is published in July issue of L.V. Naturalist.

Victorian Conservation Trust has appointed Colonel Ian James Wilton as its Executive Director.

Environment Studies Association.

Bird Study Course will be held Saturday 26th to Sunday 27th October. The Sale area has been chosen for the weekend. Cost of course \$5.00. Interested persons may obtain application forms from Environment Studies Association of Victoria , 15 Drummond St. Carlton 3053. Leadership provided by staff from Fisheries and Wildlife Division and Melbourne University.

Wirilda Environment Park.

A copy of the submission to the Victorian Government had been sent to the club. This is a beautiful production and we wish the committee success in their submission.

Programme 1975

Suggestions for speakers, excursions and areas to be visited are called for. This annual plea aimed at our members brings very little response, so we may presume all members are happy with the activities arranged. We would be grateful for some ideas from the general members, remember it is YOUR Club. Please give any suggestions to the Secretary or any member of the Committee.

Meeting to formulate programme will be held November 5th. at the home of Mrs. Peterson, 14 Barry St Morwell.

Next Committee Meeting will be held Tuesday October 22nd at the home of Mr and Mrs Thompson, Downies Lane , Traralgon South.

Supper Roster October 25th

Mrs Lyndon and helper.

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## Latrobe Valley Naturalist

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Details of contributing clubs are as follows:

### Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs I. Peterson  
14 Barry Street,  
Morwell 3840. Tel 342129

General Meetings commence at 7.30pm. on the 4th Friday each month  
at the Yallourn State School, YALLOURN.

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### Sale F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs K. Newnham,  
P.O. Box 302  
Sale 3850 Tel. 441046

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month  
at the C.W.A. Rooms, Macarthur Street SALE.

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### Traralgon F.N.C.:

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Wall  
156 Kay Street,  
Traralgon. 3844. Tel. 741948

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month at the  
City Council Reception Rooms. Traralgon.

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### Warragul F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Brooks  
3 Nobel Street,  
Warragul, 3820 Tel 21563

Meetings commence at 8.00pm. on the 3rd Friday each month  
at the Albert Street State School, WARRAGUL.

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Subscriptions payable to the Honorary Treasurer:

Mrs E. Lubcke,  
122a Helen Street,  
Morwell. 3840.

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If transport is needed on excursions please contact Mrs Crane  
Tel. 622215.

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The LATROBE VALLEY NATURALIST is the official publication of the  
Latrobe Valley Field Naturalists' Club. Contributions on any aspect of  
Natural History are invited from members of all clubs and should be  
Addressed to:

Honorary Editor (Mrs L. Padfield)  
99 Chamberlain Road,  
Newborough 3828.

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COMING EVENTS.

Traralgon F.N.C.

No Meeting in December.

Barbecue to be arranged  
Contact Secretary for details.

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Sale F.N.C.

Meeting :

Altered to November 29th. refer page 6.  
~~Friday December 6th.~~

Dr Neil Hallam "Taxonomic History of  
Eucalypts".

Excursion:

Sunday 8th December  
Phone Sale 441406 for details.

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Warragul F.N.C.

Meeting;

Friday December 15th  
Last Meeting for the year, MEMBERS NIGHT.

Excursion:

Sunday 17th November  
Labertouche. Meet F.N.C.V. bus at junction  
of Princes Highway and Labertouche Rd. at 11.00 am.

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Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday 22nd November  
Mr Gaulton, S.E.C. Geologist "GEOLOGY".

Excursion:

Saturday 23rd November

Meeting Place:

Outside Moe Library, Albert Street Moe  
at 10.00 am

December Outing

Saturday 14th December to Cape Liptrap  
area. Meet at Cape Liptrap at 2.00 pm.

A barbecue tea will be held in the Caravan Park on the  
foreshore at Walkerville North at 5.00 pm.

This is the last outing for 1974 so please try to meet with us for tea.

January 1975 Excursion, Australia Day weekend. This will be to Mt Tamboritha  
using the buildings of the St Pauls College Traralgon.  
further details on page 6.

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A NATURALIST IN THE ARCTIC.27th September 1974Address by Dr. J.H. Willis

Dr Willis commenced his address by explaining the geological contrast between the Arctic, a frozen ocean surrounded by land masses, and the Antarctic, a frozen continent isolated by three vast oceans. The 60th. parallel of latitude in the northern hemisphere passes through northern Canada, the southern tip of Greenland, the Shetland Islands, the cities of Oslo and Leningrad on continental Europe and right across southern Siberia. Pack-ice is only found against Greenland's coastline. In the southern hemisphere the 60th. parallel passes through no land at all, lying entirely within the zone of pack-ice. In the north the warm ocean current of the Gulf Stream drifts well beyond the 60th. parallel affecting the coasts of W. Britain, Iceland and Norway. Therefore the vegetation and dependant wildlife in the Arctic regions includes hundreds of different flowering plants and even more species of mosses and lichens. By contrast the Antarctic Zone has only two kinds of vascular plants and a small number of mosses and lichens.

Some of the Arctic species also grow on the higher mountains of Australia, eg. the Moonwort Fern (Botrychium lunaria), a grass Trisetum spicatum and mosses Andreaea rupestris and Racomitrium lanuginosum. Dr Willis spent one day in Greenland, a fortnight in Iceland and nearly a month in northern Scandinavia. Greenland is a little Antarctica, with an icecap thousands of feet thick. It is free of ice only along the southern coastal fringe during summertime. The exposed mountains are very jagged and precipitous, mostly of granite, gneiss and schist. There are 400 species of plants and ferns which are mostly very reduced in size, eg. the Harebell or Scottish Bluebell (Campanula rotundifolia) exists as a little rosette with a large single bell on an unbranched stem 1-3 inches tall (2.5 - 7.6 cm). Mini-forests of willows, the largest of which is 1 ft. high (30.5 cm), and low mat-forming plants grow on the tundra formation in this climate. The lovely Glacial Buttercup (Ranunculus glacialis) flowers against the melting snow and has relatively large creamy-white blooms flushed with pink or purple on the outer side of the petals. This large island is not economically viable, and its inhabitants have to rely on heavy financial support from Denmark.

Iceland is dramatically volcanic. The whole island is one and a half times the size of Tasmania and has lava flows, breached basaltic barriers, explosion craters, beds of ash, gigantic screes, vast black deserts of scoria and volcanic sand, black shingly beaches and occasional centres of thermal activity. There are few permanent ice-fields, but the south-central one covers 8.3% of the country's total area. Originally much of Iceland was fairly well wooded with trees 3 to 6 metres high but about 850 AD the Vikings colonised the island and felled the trees for housing and fuel; so the forests were virtually destroyed, leaving only little thickets in protected gullies. There are glorious deep lakes and fjords with the water quite warm in some natural caverns among rocks, even when snow covers the surrounding countryside.

The 200,000 people on the whole island have very high standards of education. Half the population lives in the capital, and the rest is very sparsely scattered. All homes are connected by telephone, and entries in the directory are according to Christian names, since these are still reckoned more significant than surnames.

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A NATURALIST IN THE ARCTIC.

contd..

Norway is 1,000 miles (1609 Km) long with  $3\frac{1}{2}$  million people, so it is not at all densely populated. It is entirely mountainous with little fringes of land along the fjords. Dr Willis thinks that Norway must have the best road engineers in the world because of the steep grades that go backwards and forwards up the mountainsides with dozens of hairpin bends. In Iceland the waterfalls are huge wide features, but in Norway they are long ribbons of water. Norway's geological structure corresponds to that of Greenland, supporting the continental drift theory that these land masses drifted apart and the line of weakness between them allowed the volcanic activity which later produced Iceland. Norway is covered with thick forests of many kinds of interesting trees. The understory is beautiful, with an extensive flower and insect life and is in complete contrast to Iceland. Dr Willis considered one of the loveliest flowers in the mossy forests was Linnaea borealis which carries nodding bells of palest pink on stems to 6 inches (15.2 cm) high and has a delicate perfume. (Linnaeus was the botanist who developed the binomial system of naming plants and this flower was adopted as his personal emblem.)

Among the slides taken in Norway were many beautiful scenes of native plants and of the way of life of Norwegians, including the drying of meadow hay on special fences, turf-roofing of houses, Bergen market on the harbour edge and a visit to the famous Bixdal Glacier. Most of the buildings in Trondheim were of wooden construction and the baskets of flowers supported high above the streets gave this and other cities a festive appearance. Slides showed the many forest trees from this region, including rowan trees, birches, aspens, spruce and pine and many of the smaller plants which, as in Australia, extend above the tree line.

Although the old section of the cities of Iceland have wooden buildings, all the wood had to be imported. Much of the green colouring of the Icelandic countryside is caused by great cushions of moss. Hot water from the geyser region is piped to the cities and used for heating, including glass houses where bananas, tomatoes, cacti, tropical climbers and other plants grow successfully. There is an endeavour to grow trees again in this country and birch, beech, larch, spruces and pines have been planted in sheltered valleys of the east. Black deserts with white glaciers in the distance were quite striking and the lava flows that had extended out into the sea and formed rock stacks provided nesting sites for birds including guillemots and quaint puffins.

Extremely old Icelandic farmhouses, 300 to 600 years old, were still in use until quite recent times. The turf from the ground is moulded to meet the turf from the roof and so the house appears completely covered. The special Icelandic breed of sheep has been perpetuated for several centuries and are multicoloured - white, cream, coffee brown, black and some even striped, but they cause great erosion by overgrazing as they crop the grasses very close and trample down moss beds. The main industry is fishing. In the only botanical garden (at Akureyri) is a very good representation of the flora indigenous to Iceland. The only native conifer in Iceland (Juniperus communis) is the same species as in Norway, but a stunted variety that sprawls along the ground.

contd..pp3

A NATURALIST IN THE ARCTIC

contd..

Winds are so violent that the haystacks have to be tethered down. On the edge of beautiful Lake Myvatn, in the north-east, several kinds of orchids are abundant. Just off the south coast of Iceland is the small island of Surtsey which is only eleven years old, and naturalists are now studying the colonisation of bare volcanic rock with plant and animal life.

Thus ended a wonderful trip that brought back memories for some members and opened doors for others who have not had the opportunity to see or learn about these interesting countries.

Bon Thompson.

Another account of this talk by Dr Willis is reported in the June 1973 issue of the S.G.A.P. Newsletter. This may be more detailed on the botanical side, but if any member wishes to read it please enquire from members who are separate members of S.G.A.P.

Ed.

BUSH NEWS FROM LAUNCHING PLACE

When we came to live here we quickly found that the block was also occupied by a Scrub Wallaby, a doe. Since we had already started putting out bread and scraps for the possums, she used to come to our front door to enjoy the food also. Very quickly she became quite tame and did not move away when the door was opened. She was a lovely creature and she raised three joeys before she finally disappeared, we think after being shot by a New Australian neighbour who apparently was not aware that she was a protected animal. Since then other Wallabies have come to the block and we occasionally see them, but I would not deliberately feed any because we think it was because of the doe's trust in human beings that she was finally killed.

We also have many possums who visit us each evening for their bowl of Pollard, run along our back verandah rail and into the house if we open the door for their evening biscuit. We occasionally see a Ringtail, but none of these approaches the house, which seems very strange as these animals are quite used to the presence of human beings.

We also have the Allied Rat in large numbers, the Brown Marsupial Mouse (these we have right at our back door), Phascogales and, of course, Bandicoots. At one time our Bandicoot population almost disappeared because we feel that they were decimated by four half grown kittens that were dumped on the block. Eventually we managed to get rid of the cats and the Bandicoots came back.

The bird population is one of our greatest joys. Many Honeyeaters, Parrots, and other birds to the number of 64 (not all permanent members of the area) have been counted. Of course we feed the birds and they reward us by promenading up and down the verandah in great numbers. The Crimson Rosella in winter we often have a flock of 30 sitting on the verandah rail waiting for their seed. The Lewin Honeyeater we were the first to record in the area, although it is very common. The Eastern Spinebill and several other Honeyeaters visit us regularly.

contd..pp 4



BUSH NEWS FROM LAUNCHING PLACE

contd.

We have also seen the beautiful and large Powerful Owl right next door. One of our best friends among the bird population is a Currawong, a very clever fellow indeed. If he wants to be fed he will bang against the window until he attracts my attention. If I ignore this he will sit on the verandah rail and carol - what a beautiful voice he has, equally as good as the lovely Magpie. He has a mate but she is much more timid. When they have young birds the two birds arrive with their family to be fed, then when the young birds are old enough to be independent the whole family disappears. The mature birds are absent for about six weeks, then they return. Perhaps they go back to the flock.

Gliders are also common in the area. We occasionally see a Sugar Glider on the old stringy bark at our front door. The Greater Glider apparently forms part of the Powerful Owl's food, because on the occasion we saw him he had obviously had one of these animals for his supper. Down in the Don River the Occasional Platypus has been seen, also the Common Water Rat.

It has always amazed us that there should be such a large variety of both animal and bird life present in such a small area. Unfortunately many of the blocks in the locality are being cleared and soon homes and shelter for the birds and mammals will be at a minimum.

Mrs Dorrie Thompson,  
Launching Place.

as told to Miss Betty Kemp.

GEELONG CAMP OUT.

October 12th, 13th.

Mr and Mrs Hunt of Geelong Naturalists kindly met our six cars and guided us to Sorrendip Research Station where we met many members of the Geelong F.N.C. Mr Hunt then introduced Mr White, an officer of the Fisheries and Wildlife Dept. who had given up his free Saturday to guide us over the station.

The station is doing a worthwhile job in studying the habits and life style of the various birds, particularly waterbirds, to encourage the "Tree" birds to nest in the area by providing their natural habitat. The whole area is a sanctuary, so the eggs should hatch without mishap thereby building up the bird population, particularly the rare species. The birds are banded, X-rayed, weighed and then allowed to return to the man made lakes to come and go as they please.

In these studies a picture is being built up that provides the scientists with facts regarding whether the birds are rare and should be totally protected or indeed if the shooting season should be extended, restricted or the time altered regarding some species. The big bushfire that swept the area a few years ago has put this program back several years.

There were other birds and animals in residence and all were being studied. Notably the Cape Barren Goose and the Bustard. These birds had built up their numbers sufficiently to allow some to be transferred to other sanctuaries.

contd..pp 5

GEE LONG CAMP OUT

contd..

In the evening we had a general get together and a lovely evening it was. A flower display was very interesting and so well presented. Mr Errey showed some excellent slides of his recent inland trip, Mr Wheeler showed slides of the flora and birds of the Ocean Grove Reserve, which is his particular "Baby". Mr Woodward's movie of the Geelong trip to the Grampians was interesting as well as amusing. Over a delightful supper we were able to really get to know our friends and as usual at our gatherings all were reluctant to bring the evening to a close.

Sunday morning we were guided by Mr Wheeler and our friends to the Ocean Grove Nature Reserve. This reserve is a real credit to the Geelong Naturalists who have worked so hard on a Committee of Management to firstly purchase the land and then develop the area. Roads, 2 miles (3.2 Km) of walking tracks, fencing and dams all had to be built, signs erected and painted. Many hours of planning and hardwork have gone into the project. Every week Schools and Associations of all kinds visit the area and are met by club members who act as guides under the leadership of Mr Wheeler. Surely some of their enthusiasm and knowledge must rub off !!!

The whole area is still in its original state and it is hoped that it will always remain so. There are about 100 species of birds so it really is a "Birdo" paradise. The trees and shrubs were very interesting and the flowers were a picture, several orchids were noted. More native plants are being planted and every week sees some improvement, as all things are done by volunteer labour with love and enthusiasm for a project loved by all.

Just inside the reserve there is an area fenced off for a colony of ants, *Iridomyrmex nitidus*. These brown ants are especially important as they are the hosts to a very rare butterfly *Pseudodipsas myrmecophila*, which is now only known to breed in this area. The butterfly lays its eggs in a stump of a tree close to the colony of ants. The ants bring the eggs into their nest in the decaying logs and the larvae spends the whole of its life in the ant's nest. It is not known how the ants benefit from this arrangement and further studies may tell us. The Geelong Nats. are endeavouring to develop more ant colonies in an effort to increase the number of butterflies. Geelong have adopted this small Ant Blue Butterfly as their emblem.

Mrs Daisy Wood, our hostess and noted painter of flowers, as well as a very enthusiastic member of the Geelong Club was asked to plant a tree. Mrs Wood is one of the most friendly and energetic ladies I have ever met, (I think) she is now in her 81st year. Miss Galbraith, as a noted Botanist was also asked to plant a tree, and I had the pleasure and privilege to plant another on behalf of the L.V.F.N.C.

Many thanks to our Geelong friends and especially Mrs Hunt who did all to ensure that our weekend was perfect . . . and succeeded. I am only sorry that circumstances prevented so many other members from being with us for the weekend.

Iris Peterson.



The next Committee Meeting of L.V.F.N.C. will be held at the home of Miss Galbraith, Tyers on Tuesday 19th November at 7.30pm. Any members of the club are welcome at these meetings.

Supper Roster November 22nd. Mrs Yerve Mrs Wall

Don't forget excursion December 14th the final outing for the year will be to Cape L. ptrap. Mr G. Rowe to be the leader. A picnic tea will be held in the Caravan Park, Walkerville North at 5.00 pm.

Australia Day 1975. Weekend Campout to Mt Tamboritha.

Details being finalised by Committee. We are to use the property owned by St Pauls College Traralgon. A charge of \$2.00 per person will be made. Camping permitted, trailers, caravans etc. but charge will still apply if you are on the property using the facilities.

More details of actual sleeping accomodation will be published in December Naturalist. This weekend is always a most enjoyable one so please give it some serious thought. Members of other clubs welcome.

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Sale F.N.C.

Meeting with Dr Neil Hallam as speaker has been moved to November 29th. This will be held at the Continuing Education Centre, Raymond St. Sale. (the old high school) further details from Sale 441406.

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BIRD WATCHING ON THE WEIR AT OLD TALLANGATTA October 2nd 1974.

We left the car on the Talgarna Rd. just through Old Tallangatta and set off across the paddocks towards the swamps. The cries of water birds filled the air as we neared the water. A White-faced Heron, or Blue Crane rose up from a small pool and flapped slowly away. I could hear a Whistling Eagle calling and located him at last hovering low over the edge of the swamp, molesting the water birds. I have often noticed hawks or eagles diving at large water birds. I think they do it to make them disgorge their last meal.

White Ibis rose up continually to settle on green willows growing in the water, others arrived and settled down while others circled around overhead. A dozen or two were in sight all the time.

I could hear the squawking of water hens among the reeds and soon had a good view of the Eastern Swamp Hen with their glossy blue shirt fronts and the Dusky Moor-hen a duller black with only white each side of the tail.

With the field glasses I identified a party of Chestnut Teal, one lovely bird a male, rich dark green head and neck, chestnut and speckled underneath and darker brown back with a green and white wing patch. The females, about 4 were very lovely at close range in their own quiet way. All brown and buffy white and grey, beautifully patterned and so well camouflaged when brooding. Above the biggest stretch of water big Black Cormorants and Little Blacks circled in flocks among the Ibis and the Pied Cormorants.

May Galbraith.

Latrobe Valley Naturalist

Details of contributing clubs are as follows:

Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs I. Peterson  
14 Barry Street,  
Morwell 3840. Tel 342129

General Meetings commence at 7.30pm. on the 4th Friday each month  
at the Yallourn State School, YALLOURN.

Sale F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs K. Newnham,  
P.O. Box 302  
Sale 3850 Tel. 441046

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month  
at the C.W.A. Rooms, Macarthur Street SALE.

Traralgon F.N.C.:

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Wall  
156 Kay Street,  
Traralgon. 3844. Tel. 741948

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month at the  
City Council Reception Rooms. Traralgon.

Warragul F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Brooks  
3 Nobel Street,  
Warragul, 3820 Tel 21563

Meetings commence at 8.00pm. on the 3rd Friday each month  
at the Albert Street State School, WARRAGUL.

Subscriptions payable to the Honorary Treasurer:

Mrs E. Lubcke,  
122a Helen Street,  
Morwell. 3840.

If transport is needed on excursions please contact Mrs Crane  
Tel. 622215.

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99 Chamberlain Road,  
Newborough 3828.





DECEMBER, 1974

ISSUE No. 132.



# *Latrobe Valley Naturalist*



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COMING EVENTS

No meetings in December for any clubs.

L.V.F.N.C.

January 1975 Campout 25th -27th at Mt Tamboritha.  
full details on page 5.

Contact Secretary for bookings in the buildings. Cost \$2.00 per person for the weekend.

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BUSH NEWS FROM LAUNCHING PLACE

contd

Just before we came to live permanently in the area, we were more or less camping in the unfinished house. About Christmas time I thought we should by now have seen some Goannas since it looked as though it could be good Goanna country. But we had not seen any at all - plenty of Skinks but no Goannas. On our last day of this particular holiday period I went around the side of the house to come face to face with quite a large Goanna. It took quickly to the nearest tree which was at the front of our house, a very nice stringy bark and quite a big tree. The Goanna climbed quickly well up the trunk. I stayed at the front door to observe it, thinking it would soon have to come down because most of the tree was in full sun, and it was a hot day and Goannas cannot stay in the sun on such a warm day for very long. In the frig. I had the the remains of a joint with not much meat on the bone and which, in any case, we were going to put out for some animal to eat. When I noticed the Goanna on the way down I took the bone and threw it where I thought the Goanna would go. It immediately snatched up the bone and decided it would stay long enough to eat it.

When we moved in permanently and the weather became warm enough for the Goanna to appear, the same Goanna (I am quite sure it was the same one by its size and general appearance) used to come about 10'clock each day obviously waiting for a snack. So we saved all the household scraps we thought it would like and also gave it an occasional egg. It was very interesting to see the way the Goanna would take and bang the egg on the ground until broken and then lap up the contents. Sometimes, however, it would swallow the egg whole.

The next year we were in residence this Goanna was joined by another one, although they never arrived at the house at the same time. So we were now feeding two Goannas. The second one was obviously a younger reptile, almost as long (approx. 4'6". 1.4 metres) as the other one but not nearly as broad.

Also, on Keals Road on the property of our neighbours, the Misses Kemp, I have seen the largest Goanna in or out of captivity. It must have been at least 6 ft (1.8 metres) long and was almost as black in colour, very broad in the body and with very long talons. When I saw it, it was up a tree quite high, obviously well aware of my presence but with no intention of coming down. I sat there for quite a long time but unfortunately had to leave before it returned to the ground. I have looked for this huge fellow on many occasions since but have not seen it. Obviously it has been in residence in the area for many years.

Mrs Dorrie Thompson,  
Launching Place.

as told to Miss Betty Kemp.



BIRDS OF THE KIMBERLEYSAddress by Brigadier Officer 25/10/74

Brigadier Officer commenced his talk by showing scenes of the Kimberleys to give an understanding of the type of country, especially the NE corner.

The huge meteor crater which is gradually filling up, a "busy" store of the Kimberley s, the typical flat stony country which is good cattle country, the remains of the original Hall's Creek buildings, gibber country, the Ord River area with its cotton fields, and the spinifex grass country were all typical of the plains. The ranges with their rugged gorges and red rocks were an immense contrast, and also the long white beach of pure shells near Broome.

A few of the typical flora were the huge Baobab trees with their bottle-like trunks, a common sight, Grevilleas, Hibiscus and many wattles which all grow well in this country.

Brigadier Officer then showed slides of many of the birds accompanying them with interesting commentary.

Emus are not under pressure in this country as there is no cropping. The slide showed the camouflaging protection of the stripes of the chicks. The Peaceful Dove is poorly named as it has a bad temper, fights readily and is very vocal; while the Crested Pigeon is common, quiet and almost terrestrial.

Budgerygahs and Zebra Finches thrive and multiply in the good seasons and were shown collecting gravel for digestive purposes. The Cromson Finch, which has survived despite the enormous numbers that were exported, and the Long-tailed Finch with its very fine black throat can also be found. The Wrens from this country include the variegated Wrens which, though common, are very shy, the Red-backed Wren with vivid scarlet back and the Black Grass-wrens.

Australian Pratincole has a colourful red beak with brown tip and the masked Plover has a fantastic yellow mask something similar to the Spur-winged Plover around here. Brolgas are very colourful and graceful birds. The Fork-tailed Kite was shown in flight displaying its forked tail. The Little Corellas showed the pink on their faces and under the wings, while the dainty Cockatill was photographed at the nest showing its bright colours and crest.

Some of the birds shown that are also seen around Gippsland, were the Owlet Nighthawk, the Barn Owl, White-winged Triller, Nankeen Night-heron, Mistletoe Bird, Rainbow Bird and Sacred Kingfisher. The Red-backed Kingfisher is very much a dry country bird with a melancholy whistle, but the most handsome bird of the family is the Forest Kingfisher with a brighter blue appearance and a white ring round its neck. The lovely Blue-winged Kookaburra doesn't laugh but makes a gurgling sound. The White-browed Woodswallow can be seen in flocks of 200 and the Masked Woodswallow and Little Woodswallow are also present. The Stone Plover or Curlew are curious birds that often inspect camps during the night and are quite common as there are no foxes in this country. Jabiru, Australia's only stork, builds a large twig nest on top of a dry tree trunk. Its dancing excels that of the Brolga.

contd..pp3

BIRDS OF THE KIMBERLEYS

contd ..

Plains Turkeys, in large numbers in the Kimberleys, are very inquisitive birds. The male inflates a pouch at the neck in the displaying season. The Peregrine Falcon is the finest, boldest and most savage of its family, while the Brown Hawk, very variable in colour, is rather idle.

The Brown Honeyeater is the most beautiful singer of all the honeyeaters and has a song similar to Reed Warblers. The Singing Honeyeater doesn't sing but has quite a pleasant note. The White-naped Honeyeaters are common noisy birds with a squeaky song. Another noisy honeyeater is the Blue-faced honeyeater with blue around the eye. The Dusky Honeyeater can be heard singing a special song before first light and doesn't repeat that particular song again during the day.

Friar-birds, both Silver-crowned and Noisy, can be distinguished by the size of the knob at the base of the beak. The Great Bower-bird, which is half as big again as the shy Spotted Bower-bird, decorates its bower with shells, bones, white stones, etc.

Brigadier Officer then showed scenes of the Drysdale and King Edward rivers and Co burn Range.

The final few slides showed some of the reptiles of the area and a few of the colourful flowers that attract the birds.

Bon Thompson.

REPORT OF EXCURSION 26/10/74

There was misty rain falling when we arrived in Morwell for the start of the excursion with Brigadier Officer, however as the day progressed so the weather improved. Eleven cars left our meeting place and at our first stop overlooking Hazelwood Pondage a Striated Pardalote was seen going in and out of a nesting hole in a tree.

The wind was a little strong for water birds, Swans and Cormorants were the only ones seen from here.

After travelling around Hazelwood and along Thompsons Road with several more stops we reached the Morwell National Park where lunch was had before touring the Park. Three Grey Fantails were busy making themselves nests, also a Blue Wren, two Flame Robins feeding flying young, a Golden Whistler coming to babies in the nest and a Yellow Robin's nest with 2 eggs. 46 birds were identified during the day, others still remain a mystery even after patiently waiting for another glimpse.

Some birds were "people watching" as we only heard these. The Brigadier would have liked to see the Lewin Honeyeater as he had not seen it in this area, it called a few times which pleased him.

At afternoon tea Mr Lyndon thanked the Brig. for his time and knowledge after which it was home time for all

Heather Christensen.



THE NINETY MILE BEACH OF NEW ZEALAND.

This area of beach is situated on the Western front of the North Auckland Peninsula facing the Tasman Sea and it measures 55 miles (88km), not 90 miles. The reason for naming it ninety mile beach is rather obscure. There is a theory that early settlers from Dalmatia measured the distance in Kilometres as this was the measure known to them.

On a recent visit to New Zealand I was pleased to be able to travel over some of this area of coastline. Our bus left the town of Kaitia, travelling through small villages to Waipapakouri and then onto the beach itself. At low tide the beach provides a good motorway for vehicles and we slowly negotiated the many small streams crossing the beach and travelled northwards to an area known as Scott Point. This is a rocky volcanic at the northern most end of the beach. The beach is the home of the shellfish Tohoroa and collecting of these is strictly controlled. Good fishing is obtained from the beach, and annual competitions are held there.

While travelling we observed many birds including Sandpipers, Sooty Oyster Catchers, White-fronted Terns, Black Shags, Southern Black-backed Gulls, Red-billed Gulls (known to us as Silver Gull). There were few Godwits; the amazing birds which travel to Siberia and Alaska from New Zealand. They arrive in September and leave during March.

The beach is backed by sand dunes up to 6.4 km in width and up to 140 metres high. They are highest in the North and gradually decrease in height to the South. Sand has to be fixed by Lupin and Marram Grass, as much of it is very mobile. Pine plantations have also been established on the sand dunes in an effort to stabilize the shifting sands.

Maori cooking places are evident, looking much like the middens of the aborigines we see at the beaches in Australia.

To reach our destination, Cape Reinga, the bus had to travel along the Te Paki Stream a short distance. This is the access from the beach to the inland road to Cape Reinga.

Cape Reinga is the northernmost portion of the North Auckland Peninsula and is a lighthouse reserve. This is an interesting area but unfortunately the visibility was practically nil as the mist descended upon us. A walk to the light house was out of the question for me. Another visit may give a better day.

From here we travelled home to Kaitia stopping for lunch at a pleasant roadside stop. On the return trip we could see the newly developed Maori Land being a project of the Lands and Survey Department and appears to be very successful judging by the sheep and cattle observed as we travelled by.

So ended a most interesting day on the coast of New Zealand.

Lorna Padfield.

### BUTTERFLY MIGRATION STUDY

There has been a migration of a black and white day-flying moth passing through Sydney for the past few days. This species has no common name; its scientific name is Nyctemora amica. Its wings are very dark brown to black with an irregular white stripe on the front wing and a white spot on the hind wing. The body has black and yellow bands and the wing span is about 1.8 inches ( average ).

Migration does not start until the temperature rises during the day; flight is more irregular and haphazard early in the day.

Extract from a letter received by Mrs Crane from Dr Smithers of the Australian Museum.

If you have any information about this moth contact Mrs Crane or the Museum. Please observe the locality, date, time of day and direction of movement.



### DETAILS OF CAMPOUT

Members of the Committee travelled to Mt Tamboritha on Saturday 7th December to see what our arrangements would be for the weekend campout in January 1975.

There are two large buildings for sleeping, one would accommodate 30 people, the other 50 people.

You will need to bring all cutlery, crockery, stoves (barbecues outside) also cooking will have to be done outside. Drinking water necessary, but plenty of water in creek a short walk from camp. Bedding, pillows, stretchers, lilos sleeping bags etc. It can be cold at night so bring plenty of warm things.

General directions. Travel via Heyfield, Licola, turn along the Tamboritha Rd. just before the bridge. The "Chalet" is found after the Tamboritha Saddle look for L.V.F.N.C. sign about 1 mile along and just past the 57 mile post. Caravans can stay near the road to the "Chalet" as the track in is rather rough. Roads are good otherwise, Trip took 2½ hours from Traralgon. Fill up with petrol at Heyfield or Licola.

There will be a local walkabout on Saturday afternoon  
A full day excursion on Sunday (take own lunch)

Monday to be arranged.

Please come and enjoy yourself in the mountains with us.



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REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD NOVEMBER 19th 1974

Agreed to forward \$4.00 to the V.F.N.C.A. for fees now due.

Program meeting held November 5th. We are now awaiting replies from several speakers.

Invitations have been sent to Warragul, Sale, Traralgon, Bairnsdale F.N.C. for the campout 25th to -27th January 1975.

Charge is \$2.00 per person for the use of the facilities, also applies to campers. Contact Secretary if you wish to put your name on the list.

Letter received from the Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics asking if we knew of any sites or artifacts of aboriginals in the LOY YANG AREA.

Contact Secretary if you have any information regarding this matter.

Submissions. Mrs Thompson our Conservation Co-ordinator had prepared and sent our submission for the MALLEE AREA.

Mrs Thompson has also sent a submission on behalf of the club for the THOMSON RIVER DAM. Many members have also sent submissions on their own behalf.

A submission is also being sent for the LOY YANG AREA.

These submission are available for members to see at any time.

Next Committee Meeting will be held on January 14th 1975 at the home of Mrs Padfield, 99 Chamberlain Rd, Newborough. at 7.30pm.

All interested members welcome at these meetings.

---

Specimen Table November 22nd.

A selection of butterflies from New Guinea. These had been given to the club by Mrs Scott of Tyers, and restored and mounted by Mrs Crane. As these butterflies had been collected during the 1939-45 war and kept between sheets of newspaper since, they are in remarkable condition. Many thanks to Mrs Crane for the work put into this project.

---

MERRY  
CHRISTMAS

Latrobe Valley Naturalist

---

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14 Barry Street,  
Morwell 3840. Tel 342129

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Mrs K. Newnham,  
P.O. Box 302  
Sale 3850 Tel. 441046

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Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Wall  
156 Kay Street,  
Traralgon. 3844. Tel. 741948

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3 Nobel Street,  
Warragul, 3820 Tel 21563

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JANUARY, 1975

ISSUE No. 133.



# *Lalrobo Valley Naturalist*

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COMING EVENTS

WARRAGUL F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday January 17th at Millers Factory  
Sutton Street Warragul.

Subject:

Mini Photoflora of 100 slides

Excursion:

Sunday 19th January

Contact Secretary for details.

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LATROBE VALLEY F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday 17th January (note change of date)  
Film "The Amazing Marsupials"

Excursion:

January 25th to 27th at Mt Tamboritha.

Bring your camping gear and join us for the weekend. Signs along the  
Tambo ritha Road will direct you to the camp.

---

REPORT OF TALK BY MR R. GAULTONNOVEMBER 22nd 1974

Mr Gaulton prefaced his talk by noting that the earth is 4,600 million years old, a mind boggling figure quite beyond the scope of our imagination. He suggested however that we might more easily relate familiar past events to the great age of the earth by visualizing our world to a lady of 46 years of age - ie 100 million years of geological time will equal one year in the life of our lady. Looking at the past in this manner we find, for instance, that the dinosaurs roamed across mother earth only a year ago (when she was 45) and were subsequently replaced by the mammals eight months ago. We can picture early man shivering under the gradual onslaught of the last great ice age about one week ago and note that but 15 minutes has passed since the exodus took place.

Mr Gaulton outlined with the aid of suitable maps and diagrams the geological evolution of our surrounding countryside from Mt Erica to Wilsons Promontory. This covered the last 6 years of our lady's life, the period of time during which complex life forms first appeared on the face of our earth. Information on the life of mother earth before the age of 40 (the PRECAMBRIAN era) is at best scant and often deeply buried. Our locality is no exception to this and Precambrian history in this area is lost.

Starting at the PALAEOZOIC (early) era and moving up through the MESOZOIC (middle) and CAINOZOIC (latest) eras, Mr Gaulton traced the geological events leading up to and responsible for the formation of the highlands to the north (palaeozoic rocks) and the Strzelecki Ranges (mesozoic rocks) to the south. Copies of geological time scale were distributed to the audience in order that the terms used to describe various geologic subdivisions could be followed and their absolute ages noted.

It was pointed out that the Latrobe Valley Brown Coal Measures are relatively young geologically, being CAINOZOIC in age, and fill a downfaulted valley in sedimentary rocks of the MESOZOIC era. The Mesozoic sequence is itself an infilling of land sediments occupying an even larger East-West trending downfaulted valley in a very thick Palaeozoic marine sequence.

An account of the mode of formation and the general geology of the Latrobe Valley coal measures was also given and covered the period from the early Cainozoic to the present day. Samples of typical local rock types of the various ages were exhibited in conjunction with the talk.

---

BIRD WATCHING AFTER OCTOBER EXCURSION.

The "birding" didn't finish for Joy and myself because before we reached home a flock of 14 Blue Winged Parrots were encountered. We had seen 6 several days before. This is the first time I have had a good look at Blue Wings in the field. Finding anything new or not often seen is a thrill and it made a nice finish for our day.

Heather Christensen.

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REPORT OF GEOLOGY EXCURSIONNOVEMBER 23rd 1974.

The thirteen cars assembled at the Moe Library and under the leadership of Mr Gaulton travelled to the Yallourn Storage Dam, near the Weir. Mr Gaulton explained, with the help of his charts of the previous evening that we were looking at rocks that were formed in the Palaeozoic era. These rocks are about 345 million years old, very hard and formed a bedding plain for the softer sedimentary rocks that would later form on top of them. They were originally horizontal but were now vertical due to the thrust upwards when the Haunted Hills were formed. These rocks still had water ripple marks on them denoting that they were once under water. Several minor faults were noted in the rocks as well.

We then went to a cutting on the Princes Highway to the "New" area called the Haunted Hills, these babies are only about 30 million years old !! This area, in Pliocene times was much lower and composed of sands, gravel and clay, probably eroded from the highlands and distributed over the floor of the valley by the streams and shallow lakes that formed. However the area was uplifted at this time and the Haunted Hills were "Born" and the swampy flats were created. It is interesting to note that the clay and gravel had been laid down before the uplift and is now to be seen in certain areas to a height of 183 metres high.

We continued along the back of Trafalgar and up into the hills. Most of this high land South of the Latrobe Valley is of Mesozoic sedimentary rock, with an occasional patch of basalt and early Tertiary sediments. These rocks are composed of a cross bed of mudstone, sandstone and felspar and coal. Faults and folds occurring affect the other layers of rocks making these hills very unstable, especially in wet weather and land slides are frequent. Mr Gaulton assured us that the ridges we saw running horizontally around the hills were caused by slipping and not by the sheep, although the sheep made full use of them as "Natural" roads.

It was on through the rich red loam that was in fact basalt rock weathered and broken down and was very good soil for growing potatoes. We had lunch at the Narracan Falls. These falls were formed as the stream passes from the hard rock (basalt) to the softer rocks (sedimentary). Its profile steepened because of the greater erosion taking place on the softer rocks.

We then travelled through Thorpdale and to the Wilderness Creek area. This was in fact part of the famous Childers Formation. This formation is the oldest of these sediments and up to 36 metres in thickness, it is composed of conglomerates, quartz, clays, sands and some brown coal. This in turn is covered by the rocks of the Thorpdale Volcanic type. We had a lovely time in the sandstones as there were fossils of grass, trees and leaves. Many people took specimens of their finds home.

We travelled along the Jumbuck Road and into a disused quarry where we saw fine examples of Mesozoic and Tertiary rocks . . . that is sands and gravels the same as at Trafalgar and also the same as Princes Highway but these rock layers were overlapping, denoting that there had been minor earth movements since they were first laid down.

GEOLOGY EXCURSION

contd..

A little distance further along we stopped again for a wonderful view, but we were really looking at the upfaulted hills on either side of the valley composed of Palaeozoic and Mesozoic rocks (345 million years old). A thick layer of Lower to Middle Tertiary sediments, lavas and brown coal covering the down faulted valley. These softer sediments are sitting on a base of older and harder Palaeozoic and Mesozoic rock. It was quite an experience to realise that what we were looking at took nature millions and millions of years to accomplish.....making one feel insignificant and small.

All in all we had a marvellous day and it was voted by several children to be the best day they had ever had!!

Our thanks must go to Mr Gaulton who was a marvellous leader and made his address of the previous evening "come alive" for us.

Iris PetersonBIRDS AT OLD TALLANGATTA

A huge bird all white underneath with end half of wings black flew slowly over then flew out of sight. I think it was a Pelican, only one we saw on the trip.

Black Ducks in small flocks or twos and threes were in sight all the time. These are very beautifully marked too, the irridescent green patch on each wing is very noticeable as they take off from the water. In flight they look black with white underwings. While hiding close to a reed bed I could hear a "plop" like a big fish jumping. I thought it must be the waterhens playing about but soon saw a large carp jump up and nibble the reed stems. Then I saw another, bright orange-red all over about 30 cm long. Lance says they are Goldfish, not the harmful carp.

I could hear the clear Pip-pip of a White Fronted Dotteral but could not see him that day. Along the lake shore near where we camped we had excellent views of these dainty little denizens of the sand margins.

I caught a glimpse of a Blue Wren among the reed edges too. I didn't expect to see one there. A Black-backed Magpie was gathering worms for his babies in a nest on the hill and disputed my right to walk in his feeding ground.

Before leaving for the car I swung the glass along the swamp edges for a last survey and saw a lovely sight. A Great White Egret was walking with long stately strides across the grass, keeping his neck very straight. A few yards behind him a White-faced Heron was also stepping out and behind him the prettiest of all the ducks a Chestnut-breasted Shell Duck or Mountain Duck. Bottle green head and neck, then a white band and a bright chestnut breast. When in flight these ducks just look dark with white under wing, none of their beauty shows till they settle.

Swallows and Fairy Martins were darting about as usual over water and two Silver Gulls patrolled the waters. We saw two gulls every day. I expect they were the same two, gulls often fly inland to large lakes.

May Galbraith.



TWO ON A HOLIDAY ...AND A POSSUM !

Just as Mrs Crane and I were about to leave on a camping trip to Western Victoria a lad brought a baby Ring-tailed Possum to be cared for, as its mother had been killed. Mrs Crane tried to contact Mr Roberts the Wildlife Officer but he was away, so she decided to take "Baby" with us. The possum, I might add, couldn't have fallen into better hands as she fed it milk, crushed biscuits, honey, apples etc, at all hours of the day and night and it even slept with her ( in a box ) and during the day it slept on a hot water bottle. Frankly, I didn't give him Buckleys chance of surviving when he arrived as he seemed so small but he did very well and is as active as he should be. ... top marks for a job well done, Honor.

We finally got started and arrived at the Grampians in good time to set up our camp and have tea before dark. We had no sooner done so when the rain and wind came with full force and if Honor hadn't done such a good job with the tent pegs we might have been blown to Tasmania!! However by morning the wind had died down although the rain still came in really heavy showers so we decided to see the water falls in the area and we saw tetathecas, grevilleas, the orange bell climbers, the correas and the dainty little fairies aprons all made a wonderful show, especially in the Wonderland area where the heaths and boronias were well above my head. We must have seen 50 kangaroos too and they always give pleasure. We made friends with two "Bikies" from S.A., they were nice lads and shared their camp fire with us. We grilled steak and made toast over the fire for tea and I wouldn't have changed places with the Queen!! The Grampians were only supposed to be a stopping place and as we had already stayed longer than intended we decided to pack up, wet tent or no, and make for Wyperfeld Nat.Park which was our real destination. We arrived there in perfect weather and in time for tea. Afterwards we went spotlighting and were able to feed three brushtailed possums, which came right up to take the bread we had. For those who haven't been to Wyperfeld it is a "must" for the future. The park is our largest Nat.Park comprising about 140,000 acres and as there were only about 10 camps there, and all seemed to be Naturalists it really was a pleasure. The bird list stands at about 200 and the flora list at about 350 species including 14 different wattles. But the main attraction and the reason why the park exists is the Mallee fowls. We were exceedingly lucky to see a fowl and kept it in view for quite a while ( Oh for a Camera!! ). The bird just walked away in a very stately manner, not like the one I had seen on a previous visit which just "melted". However though we walked for the rest of the day we didn't see a mound, mainly because we were too "chicken" to go far off the trail and as the Lowans were not obliging enough to build in the middle of a track we couldn't find one! The Ranger took pity on us and gave us directions to see a disused mound and though it was still a thrill to see one, it just didn't have the same impact or excitement as coming across one unexpectedly. Parrots were plentiful and noisy and Honor was so enthusiastic about the birds that we decided to get up early (6.00 am) and go without breakfast ( on holidays too!! ) to see the Regent Parrots etc. It seemed that that we were the only early birds, there were more around at 10.00 am than early. I can assure you that the saying re the early birds and worms etc, is a myth!! Mrs Crane was terribly excited about a Blue Wren. She couldn't find a picture of the bird she had seen, but felt it must be the Black-backed Wren... Later we talked to some Birdos and they confirmed that Honor was right and that the picture in the book didn't do the bird justice.

TWO ON A HOLIDAY

contd..

We also saw a "photoflora" shot ... two tawny frogmouths, one sitting sideways for all the world like a piece of bark and the other face on and all fluffed up, both just sitting there waiting for their photo to be taken. The fine old red gums and other mallee trees were really at their best and the flowers were an absolute carpet. Golden pennants, wattles, calytrix, velvet bushes, dampiera, baeckea, stackhousia and millions of the orchid Thelymitra aristata, lots of them growing in the porcupine grass for protection from the rabbits.

Man, fire and rabbits seem to be the enemies of the park. About twenty years ago a disastrous fire swept through it and burnt about 50,000 acres. Most of it has recovered but one section has not. This area had previously been a fine grove of Murray Pine but natural regrowth has not taken place because of the rabbits so it is still bare.

Fire is a great danger to the mallee fowl as it will not return to a burnt out area until it is completely recovered and that could take up to 14 years! Also when the grasses are burnt there is nothing to hold the sands, which become mobile and creep over grass areas and ruin them, besides blowing for miles etc... the Mallee dust storms.

Our stay at Wyperfeld was all too short but we had to pull up stakes and came through the hill which was all leveed up with water lapping the roadside, and through the little desert, trying to make for Kiata but the road was too bad. I wished time would allow us to stay longer as the flowers seemed to be bigger and brighter, particularly the orchids, than we had seen earlier on our trip. However with further rain threatening the road being as it was we moved on through some beautiful Red Gums to Coleraine. Next day we saw the Wannon and Nigretta Falls, the former being a long straight drop and the Nigretta broken. Each was lovely in its own way. We then headed for Tower Hill Sanctuary, then onto the Great Ocean Road and Loch Ard Gorge etc. etc... a really breathtaking coastline. We motelled the last night, by way of celebrating, at Beechforest, sharing a double bed ...possum too!! (I nearly died when I was told that on the following morning) it was a good holiday for all that!!

The possum weighed  $3\frac{1}{2}$  oz. after 3 weeks and was almost double the size he was when Honour adopted him.

Iris Peterson

The latest information about the possum is that he weighs 340 grams ( 12 ozs) Mrs Crane has had him since 15th October. Many members have seen him as he comes with his mistress to excursions etc.

Best wishes

Best wishes to all L.V.F.N.C. members have come from Los Angeles from a former Mr V. Jernakov. We hope he can find a club with similar interests over there.

Another visitor during the holidays was Mr George Scanlan, now living at Ballarat. Some of our members were able to see him on this trip.



Nature Notes

We had a wonderful day yesterday; one of those days when every thing turned out beautifully. The weather was perfect. On the way to Wangaratta we stopped near Everton where we saw a whole hillside of "eggs and bacon" flower. There were at least three kinds, Dillwynia retorta, D. glaberrima and Pultenaea foliosa. They were very pretty. We found a Brown Beard, a Green-comb Spider with two of them on one stem, and a Finger-flower in bud.

The birds were glorious. Two thrushes were singing, a Rufous Song-lark making his explosive song and a Satin Flycatcher and others adding to the morning chorus. We could have stayed longer but we had a big programme. We intended to stay an hour at Nakkala as Jill has so many visitors to see her garden. The hour went all too quickly but we did enjoy seeing her beautiful floriferous natives. Most of the frost scars are healed now.

We ate our lunch under the big Red Boxtree. When we left Jill told us to take the next turn right and drive two miles along it and see the Purple Diuris, which we did. We found abundance of the largest Purple Diuris we had ever seen, with "tails" about 2½-ins. long and also yellow Showy Podolepis, Blue Flax-lily, Finger-flower, Wedge-pea, and at least three kinds of golden everlasting. There were Milkmaids, Chocolate Flowers and Bulbine Lilies by the thousands and Blue-bells galore, as well as the three sorts of egg-and-bacon again and Showy Guinea-flower. The Purple Diuris had up to six flowers on a stem, all out at once. I have never seen anything like them. They certainly like a wet season.

After that we drove to Chiltern forest and saw between 30 and 40 Flying Duck-orchids in bloom. In the same place there were tall Grass Trigger plants, red Alpine Grevillea and Erect Guinea-flower, White Caladenias, Dotted Sun-orchids, and lots more. We were so tired then our eyes could not take in all the beauty.

From a letter May Galbraith

WANTED

WANTED

ARTICLES SUITABLE TO FILL THIS SPACE OR SIMILAR.

Could this be your New Year Resolution? To write something for the NATURALIST.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL

## Latrobe Valley Naturalist

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Details of contributing clubs are as follows:

### Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

#### Honorary Secretary:

Mrs I. Peterson  
14 Barry Street,  
Morwell 3840 Tel 342129

General Meetings commence at 7.30pm on the 4th Friday each month  
at the Yallourn State School, YALLOURN.

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### Sale F.N.C.

#### Honorary Secretary:

Mrs K. Newenham,  
P.O. Box 302  
Sale 3850 Tel. 441046

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month  
at the C.W.A. Rooms, Macarthur Street SALE.

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### Traralgon F.N.C.

#### Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Wall  
156 Kay Street,  
Traralgon 3844. Tel 741948

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month at the  
City Council Reception Rooms. TRARALGON

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### Warragul F.N.C.

#### Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Brooks  
3 Nobel Street,  
Warragul, 3820 Tel 21563

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 3rd Friday each month  
at the Albert Street State School, WARRAGUL.

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Subscriptions payable to the Honorary Treasurer:

Mrs E. Lubcke,  
122a Helen Street,  
Morwell 3840.

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If transport is needed on excursions please contact Mrs Crane  
Tel. 622215.

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The LATROBE VALLEY NATURALIST IS THE official publication of the  
Latrobe Valley Field Naturalist Club. Contributions on any aspect of  
Natural History are invited from members of all clubs and should be  
addressed to:

Honorary Editor (Mrs I. Padfield)  
99 Chamberlain Road,  
Newborough 3828.

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FEBRUARY, 1975

ISSUE No. 134

# *Latrobe Valley Naturalist*



**Protect and enjoy**

**20c.**

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COMING EVENTS.

WARRAGUL F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday February 21st ANNUAL MEETING

The Misses Greggs will show slides of a trip to  
Western Australia.

Excursion:

Sunday February 23rd.  
Contact Secretary for details.

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TRARALGON F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday March 7th ANNUAL MEETING

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LATROBE VALLEY F.N.C.

Meeting :

Friday February 28th

Mr A. Ringin "A Naturalist in the Inland"

Excursion:

Saturday March 1st to inspect " WIRILDA"

Meet at Tyers River bridge Yalln North Tyers Road at 10.00 am.

Boat Trip

Saturday March 15th to Chinamans Bay

Leaving Welshpool early morning. Bookings and money to be paid  
at the February meeting.

Details page 6.

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ORCHIDS AT NERRENA, near LEAONGATEA.

About three summers ago a local naturalist, Mr John Brewster, noticed a beautiful Leek Orchid in his paddock. He thought it was Prasophyllum flavum, the Yellow Leek, which is considered pretty rare. It was a good year for Leeks and other orchids and I had seen some robust yellowish forms of P. elatum about. It was with some doubt that I joined a panel of local "experts", Orchid Book in hand, and we descended upon the Brewster farm at Nerrena. After some swotting over both book and orchid we came to the same conclusion as the proud owner, that it was indeed P. flavum. It was a dark coloured orchid, the leaf much shorter than the inflorescence, and the lateral sepals were broad and fused together. The perfect little orchids were close-packed up the stem.. Since then I, and others, have usually managed an annual visit to this interesting paddock.

This is a very special little forest of Mr Brewsters', a managed woodland of tall slender trees, mostly Messmates, although Common Peppermint, Swamp Gum and Blue Gum occur in the vicinity. A gully has been enclosed to save a sample of the original flora and here tall bracken, Silver Tussock, and other native grasses, Wild Raspberries, Wonga Vine, Clematis, Love Creeper and Apple-berries; with some wattles, make a haven for the smaller birds such as Wrens, Finches, Thornbills, Scrub-wrens, etc.

In the open woodland the ground is unbroken but lightly grazed by cattle, and bracken is actively discouraged. It is a delightful place on a clear day, with long vistas of clean tree boles and sun dappled spaces, quite free of under growth except for the low carpet of thin native grasses and herbs.

The tree canopy high above is alive with bird calls. There are many colonies of the commoner orchids of the district scattered throughout. Common Birds, pink speckled Hyacinths, Large Tongue Orchids, Tall and Nodding Greenhoods, and

Helmets of several kinds, including the rare C. aconitiflorus, the spurred Helmet, in season. Many of these special ones are thoughtfully enclosed in netted pens to foil the heifers that spend their leisure hours trying to break in. This ensures safe flowering and seeding for the orchids.

The district has suffered some furious gales lately and Mr Brewster tells me he has picked up about 20 nests about the farm, dislodged from trees and bushes by the wind. He pointed out the remains of a Podargus nestling that had fallen from a very high nest and perished. We hope the female Whistler, at present (12/1/75) sitting so cosily on her nest in the fork of a tea tree has better luck.

Ellen Lyndon.

A SECOND LOOK.

It doesn't pay to dismiss any bird at first glance as "Oh, just a ---".

During our brief stop at Twenty Acre Creek I espied a small pool in the rocks where some Silvereyes and Blue Wrens were enjoying a most uninhibited bathe. Two Spinebills were preening and a Rufous Fantail darting about near by, and about five Red-browed Finches flitted in the tree above. But wait a minute. . . those Red-brows. :. No indeed! Beautiful Firetails!

June Lübcke.



OUR TRIP TO WESTERN AUSTRALIA

After leaving Morwell we spent the first night with our daughter Janet and her family at Heathmont. Next morning our son-in-law drove us through Melbourne. Travelling down the Western Highway we noticed a fair amount of acacia blooming. The weather was springlike and we enjoyed a few pink and mauve flowers along the roadside, but most of the flowers were brown and yellow. The Wimmera River was in flood and in some places it was sandbagged to keep the water back from the houses. The Wimmera flows into Lake Hindmarsh and during floods finds its way eventually into Wyperfeld National Park.

We stopped outside Nhill at the historic marker in memory of the Australian poet John Shaw Neilson, who was my father's cousin. We stopped overnight at Keith where it rained and blew all night. Next day we reached my brother's place in the Adelaide suburb of Salisbury in time for lunch. After two days we went on to a motel at Port Augusta, and the next day to Ceduna. We lunched by the road and here we were beginning to get into wildflower country and saw lots of blue and yellow flowers. It rained all night at Ceduna, and all next day, making the unsealed part of Eyre Highway very bad to travel as it is like a wide shallow drain holding all the water that falls on it. There are signs along it "Dust Hazard". This seemed rather humorous as we saw only mud and water for 250 miles (402 Km) on the way to Eucla where we spent the night. Next day the Roads Board closed the road.

At Eucla there is an historic marker commemorating the East-West Telegraph service (1877- 1927) linking Adelaide and Darwin and Great Britain and the world. There is also a cross in memory of men who built the Eucla Pass.

From the sea near Eucla it is 200 Km to Hampton Tableland above Madura. The tablelands are very flat on top like sand dunes millions of years old. On the way to Madura we passed a lot of straggling acacias, the flowers starting to fade, and also Wild Peach-trees or Quandongs. Between Madura and Cariguna we saw miles of yellow everlasting and about 112 Km from Norseman we saw a lovely lot of Sturt's Desert Pea. Between Norseman and Coolgardie there were spectacular patches of wildflowers and the cameras worked overtime. At Coolgardie a notice told us it was the birthplace of Australian Rules football. From Coolgardie to Merredin it was a field naturalists' holiday. There was pink, yellow and white hakea, and we revelled in the bright colours of other flowers - blue, pink, mauve, yellow and especially the brilliant blues. In places the roads were lined with bright blue flowers.

We had a lovely trip to Perth, except for the one day on the unmade part of Eyre Highway.

While in Perth we stayed at a very good caravan park; Kenborn in Queen's Park, which is about 6 miles (9.6 Km) from the city. On our first day (Sept 24th) we rested, and next day (Wednesday) we drove to Mundaring weir and John Forrest National Park. The wildflowers were again lovely and in great variety and beauty and we especially enjoyed the red and green Kangaroo Paws which seemed to be everywhere. After shopping next morning we spent the afternoon on a restful and interesting boat trip down the Swan River to Fremantle and on Friday we went to the Serpentine Weir and the Jarrah country at Tara, lunching at the weir. We noticed that the W.A. grass-tree was different from the Victorian species.

contd....

OUR TRIP TO WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

contd..

It has four-sided leaves which are quite brittle, and people spoil the look of them along the pathways by breaking them off. Our grass-tree would cut their fingers.

On the Saturday we went to Yanchep where a new township called Sun-City has been built. We also visited Walyunta Park and Gooseberry Hill where an old railway track has been dismantled. Everywhere there were wildflowers in abundance.

John Peterson who was with us that day remarked that he was pleased to have seen Gooseberry Hill as he had just been reading about the old railway track. On that days outing we saw Cats-paw, Kangaroo Paw, Smoke Bush and many orch ids, and noticed the striking green colour of the W.A. grass-trees.

We spent sunday, September 29th in Kings Park, where we were invited to a barbecue lunch. Most of the park is overgrown with wild hyacinth and weeds, but there is a lot of red and green Kangaroo Paw. We saw the attractive floral clock and climbed the lookout tower to have a look over Perth.

During a quiet day on Monday we spent a little time seeing Perth's shopping centre and doing a little shopping.

Next day we travelled about 150 miles (241 Km) north to a large farm in the Wongan Hills district at a place called Kondut where we spent a few days enjoying ourselves. It was a farm of 20281 acres (4099 ha) of which 728 ha is arable, with 2428 ha under crop. 1400 to 2000 sheep are shorn each year and stud lambs bred for sale. We did a little mining and found some crystals.

The Woody Pear was growing nearby and we were informed that there are 2000 named species of wildflowers in W.A. \*† We enjoyed Kangaroo Paws by the acre wherever we went.

On Friday Oct. 5th. Miss Elizabeth Burgess invited us to lunch and afterwards to see a wildflower display in King's Park. I am afraid this is where the story ends, as I blacked out at the lunch table and ended up in the Royal Perth Hospital. We travelled home by train.

E. McElroy

\*\* This is a very modest estimate. There are over 6000 species of flowering plants in the S.W. corner of W.A., a greater concentration of wildflowers than in any similar area in the world. except in South Africa where there are even more.

J. Galbraith.

Mrs Brooks writes that a relative recently assisted in fighting the fires in the Balranald di strict. While working at night making fire breaks and generally putting out smouldering stumps he was amazed at the number of mice and lizards running aro und over the burnt ground.

He was anxious to know how long these little animals would survive when all the vegetation was burnt, and also would the mice be native or not. Some reader may have the answer to these queries.



AMAZING MARSUPIALS

Film by Shell Oil Co. shown January 17th 1975.

Accompanied by scenes of the Australian environment a theory of why Australia is the home to most of the world's marsupials was expounded. An island south of Tasmania shows evidence that Australia was once joined to Antarctica and, it is also thought, to India forming what was once called Gondwanaland.

Marsupial comes from the latin word for pouch. The highly immature state of young at birth place the marsupials before the placental mammals in the scale of evolution. Marsupial fossils have been found in Europe, America and Australia and it is now thought that marsupials reached Australia by means of the Antarctic islands from South America.

There are approx. 120 species of marsupials which cover every form of diet - leaves, grass, ants and animals. They use all habitats from underground to treetops and many methods of mobility from hopping and running to gliding. The use of such a variety of habitats is thought to be due to the fact that these areas were all unoccupied when the marsupials arrived in Australia.

In 1500 AD marsupials were unknown when the first report of these animals reached Europe. Then in 1629 the Dutch explorer Pelsart described the Tammam Wallaby making it the first Australian marsupial species to be known in Europe. Another Dutch explorer William De Vlamingh described the great numbers of rat-like animals on the island he named Rottnest Island, - the dutch for "rat-nest". These little animals were the Quokkas, which today are so tame that they greet the tourists and eat the bread they offer.

The true manner of marsupial birth was first observed in a captive pet Tammam on the H.M.S. Sulphur in 1830 by Surgeon Collie. However no research was carried on to explain exactly what happened until 1940s and in the 1960s the birth of the Red Kangaroo was filmed by C.S.I.R.O. The embryo is about the size of a peanut and normally emerges 33 days after mating. The film showed the completely unaided journey of the tiny embryo to the pouch and becoming attached to the nipple. Delayed implantation occurs. The female usually mates a few days after the birth, but development at this stage is only slight and then the continued development occurs after the present joey leaves the pouch. Therefore it is possible for the female kangaroo to supply two kinds of milk for the two so different offspring.

It is thought that competition with the placental mammals caused the marsupials to die out in Europe and America but as no such competition occurred in Australia, they continued to thrive and evolve.

On Lake Callabonna, S.A. huge fossil footprints of the Diprotodon have become visible. There were 20 species of these prehistoric marsupials from the size of a sheep to a hippopotamus. The first discovery of fossil remains occurred in 1893 and since then systematic exploration has taken place assisted by American scientists. The fossils of the marsupial lion have proved it to be the most powerful marsupial. The complete skeleton was found in a pit near Moree in N.S.W. in 1966, but fossils of it have been found in all states of Australia.

contd.

AMAZING MARSUPIALS contd...

There are 36 species of marsupial carnivores. Perhaps the most aggressive for its size is Burns Marsupial Mouse which is 1 foot (33 cm) from nose to tip of tail. It has no proper pouch, the young just attach themselves to a teat and hang on. These little animals are being bred and studied in a university.

There are 4 species of native cats. A Native Cat was kept as a pet in Western Australia and studied by a zoology student. There is a private zoo in Tasmania where Tasmanian Devils are bred. They are scavengers with enormously strong jaws that can and do devour every part of a carcass.

A film of the Marsupial Wolf - Thylacine - taken in 1939 provides a record of the last living specimen known then. No specimen alive or dead has been found since 1930. It has never been recorded alive on the mainland but fossils have been found all over Australia.

This was the end of the first half of the film. Unfortunately the globe in the projector would not work for the second half but everyone present agreed we must get the film again to see the second half.

As I have no-one to check these notes for me and they were taken at a rather rapid speed I am afraid I must ask that you excuse any mistakes.

Bon Thompson

BIRDS AT OLD TALLANGATTA

On returning to the car I noticed a tiny bird alight on the fence near some rushes. A close look through the glasses proved it to be a Golden-headed Fantail Warbler, so that was a rare sight.

We drove up along the far side of the Weir Arm through the few remaining homes at Old Tallangatta and lunched on the roadside high above the water. Many drowned trees were still lifting bare branches aloft. Sitting on a willow branch, perfectly camouflaged were two Grey Teal. These are smaller than Black Ducks and paler in colouring. Several shades of grey, black, white and buff are blended in beautiful patterns on their back, wings and breast toning perfectly with the greys and brown of the dead willow trunk. They looked very peaceful sitting quietly in the sun.

We had a wonderful week of birding at Tallangatta and surrounds. One day we drove along the Tallangatta Valley Road following Lake Hume. Here we saw many Great White Egrets and some Plumed Egrets, a Yellow-billed Spoonbill, a White-necked Heron and an Australian Darter. He is that queer bird that swims with only his thin snakelike neck out of the water. He twists his head around in a very snake like manner too, which adds to the delusion. On this drive we also saw about twenty Black Swans and one family with Cygnets. Altogether we listed 80 birds for the ten days.

May Galbraith,



REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD JANUARY 14th 1975 .

Screen for slides. After discussion at earlier committee meetings , Mrs Crane offered to clean the screen at the school which we use to show our films. Mr Lubcke supplied the bleach for the job.

Members may notice a difference when slides are shown now.

Our thanks to Mrs Crane for this mammoth task, it was very time consuming and also skin consuming.

Subscriptions have been paid to

1. F.N.C.V.
2. C.C.V.

The Alpine Society was formed in September 1974.

Its objects are preserving and protecting the alpine regions of Victoria; including the fauna and flora of these regions.

Membership is open to all persons and organisations interested in supporting the objects of the society.

Subscription \$2.00 for the first year.

Treasurer Mr Ross Scott, A.C.F. Headquarters, Clarendon St. E. Melbourne. Some of our members may be interested in this society.

WIRILDA. Mr Thompson advised that a grant of \$70,000.00 has been made available enabling the purchase of farmland needed for the project. further meetings and activities are planned for the establishment of facilities in the area to be known as Wirilda Environmental Park.

Supper Roster February 28th Mrs O'Rielly and helper

Next Committee Meeting will be held at the home of Mr and Mrs Branson 13 Cross St Newborough on February 25th at 7.30pm.

Programme for 1975 has been finalised and will be distributed to members.

Survival magazine for 1975 available at a cost of 40 cents per copy.

3 copies a year \$1.20. order from Mrs Lubcke.

Boat trip to Chinamans Bay. As listed in the programme will be March 15th.

As the boat can only take a limited number of people it is requested that all names and money be made ready at the February meeting.

\$2.00 per head. Boat will leave from Welshpool early morning, time to be advised at the meeting.

If you intend going on the boat trip be sure to see Mrs Lubcke at the next meeting. We must have this positively arranged with the boat owner after our meeting.

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# Latrobe Valley Naturalist

Details of contributing clubs are as follows:

## Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs I. Peterson  
14 Barry Street,  
Morwell 3840 Tel 342129

General Meetings commence at 7.30pm on the 4th Friday each month  
at the Yallourn State School, YALLOURN.

## Salc F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs K. Newenham,  
P.O. Box 302  
Salc 3850 Tel. 441046

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month  
at the C.W.A. Rooms, Macarthur Street SALE.

## Traralgon F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Wall  
156 Kay Street,  
Traralgon 3844. Tel 741948

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month at the  
City Council Reception Rooms. TRARALGON

## Warragul F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Brooks  
3 Nobel Street,  
Warragul, 3820 Tel 21563

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 3rd Friday each month  
at the Albert Street State School, WARRAGUL.

Subscriptions payable to the Honorary Treasurer:

Mrs E. Lubcke,  
122a Helen Street,  
Morwell 3840.

If transport is needed on excursions please contact Mrs Crane  
Tel. 622215.

The LATROBE VALLEY NATURALIST IS THE official publication of the  
Latrobe Valley Field Naturalist Club. Contributions on any aspect of  
Natural History are invited from members of all clubs and should be  
addressed to:

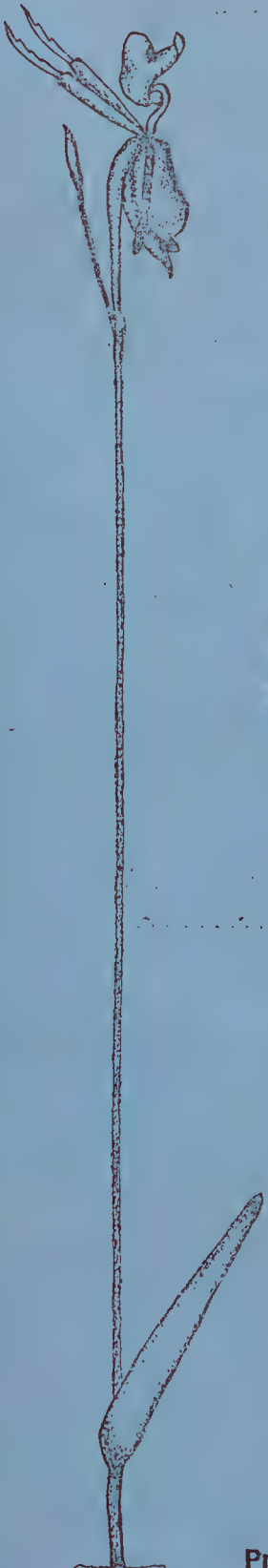
Honorary Editor (Mrs I. Padfield)  
99 Chamberlain Road,  
Newborough 3828.





MARCH, 1975

ISSUE No. 135.



# *Latrobe Valley Naturalist*

Protect and enjoy

20c.

Registered at the General Post Office Melbourne for transmission by Post as a Periodical Category B.



COMING EVENTS

Warragul F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday March 21st  
Mr A.W. Read of the Lands Department  
illustrated lecture on noxious weeds.

Excursion

Sunday 23rd March to Pioneer Creek Rd  
off Powelltown Noojee Rd.

Meeting place Junction of Powelltown Pioneer Creek Rd , look for sign post.  
10.30 am

---

Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday March 21st  
Annual Meeting, Members to bring slides  
to be shown.

Barbecue:

April 12th at Hazelwood Arboreteum  
meeting at 11.00 am.

Special meeting in April with Miss Dixon speaking on " Mammals"  
Other clubs in the area invited to this meeting.

Excursion

Meeting place

Saturday April 19th  
Boolarra Bridge rest area , just outside  
Boolarra on Tarwin River at 10.30 am.

Mrs Lyndon to be the leader.

---

ANNUAL MEETING 1975.

The next meeting of the L.V.F.N.C. March 21st will be the Annual Meeting and Election of Office Bearers.

Office Bearers to be elected are

1. President ( Mr Moretti)
2. Vice President (Mr Thompson)
3. Treasurer (Mrs Lubcke)

Nomination forms published in this issue of Naturalist. Nominations for office must be in the hands of the Secretary before the next Committee Meeting March 18t

Annual Subscriptions are also due now, these are

Family Member	\$ 3.50
Single Member	\$ 3.00
Naturalist only	\$ 2.50

The Naturalist will cost the same at present although there are increased postal charges taking effect from March 1st. Costs of the naturalist will be looked at very closely during the coming financial year with a view to some increase in charges next year.

The Secretary has received a letter from At <sup>P</sup>Paul's College expressing regret at the double booking for the Chalet at Tamboritha. The second boking occured from the Brunswick College, and our booking had been checked with them before being accepted by St. Paul's College

LATROBE VALLEY FIELD NATURALIST CLUB

Date. . . . .

Nomination Form for Office

The Secretary,  
14 Barry St,  
Morwell Vic 3840

I wish to nominate .....  
of ..... for the position of .....  
of this Club.

Proposer.....

Seconder .....

I hereby agree to accept nomination for the above office in the Club.

Signed.....



A COMEDY OF ERRORS.

Mr Higgins had kindly given us permission to roam over his property at Tamboritha during our Camp-out, and Mrs Gwen Webb and a few other Field Nats happened to encounter him during one of their rambles. I was rather dismayed when Gwen reported ( as I thought), " Mr Higgins told us he was up here shooting some of his horses ". ( Not long after we had settled into camp a couple of shots had sounded loud across the valley ).

I was relieved, both for the sake of the horses and Mr Higgins kindly reputation, to hear Gwen repeat later, " Mr Higgins was up here shoeing some of his horses ".

Much laughter at my confessed mistake :

" Oh no", Gwen assured me, "He was merely putting shoes on them ".

A surprised exclamation from another lady. " Oh ! Shoeing them! Well I had thought you meant he was shoeing them along. You know -- Shoo! Shoo! "

June Lubcke .

Members will be sorry to hear that our friend Mrs Win Morrison has recently been in hospital in Melbourne. We all wish her well and a speedy recovery to good health again. The Morrises were to attend the last meeting of our club but the illness of Mrs Morrison prevented this. All members present signed a get well card for Mrs Morrison.

Warragul F.N.C. Annual Meeting held in February elected the following office bearers.

<u>President</u>	Mrs E. Algie		
<u>Vice Presidents</u>	Mr G.R. Briggs	Mr J. Eve	
<u>Secretary</u>	Mr J. Brooks	<u>Treasurer</u>	Mrs N. Brooks

FEES ARE NOW DUE FOR 1975

\$3.50 per family. The treasurer will be pleased to receive your subscription.

WANTED...THE SOLUTION TO A MYSTERY.

Over a number of weeks I have had a curious happening recurring in some of my seedling pots.

It began one morning when I found a pot with a bulge in the surface but the earth not broken. I patted the earth smooth, but the following morning there was another bulge and again the surface was pressed level. The next morning the surface was broken and a noticeable cavity left. I had assumed that something had been trying to get out and had succeeded.

This episode was repeated in other pots and always in the ones with the most precious seedlings, and although none of these were damaged they were all evidently disturbed by the eruptions, and subsequently died.

Eventually after losing four of my more precious or rare seedlings the phenomenon occurred in a pot containing a common species, so I decided I would deliberately risk losing it in order to find out what animal was causing the disturbance.

I began by gently pouring water on the surface - immediately a bubble of air escaped, the water disappeared and I saw a large frog sitting in the broken bulge. It was looking rather dazed so I gently lifted it with a table-spoon (into which it just fitted) and put it out in the garden.

All the earth in the pots is sieved immediately prior to filling and this is the only way of entering is through the drainage holes at the bottom, which are not more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. square. Earlier I had seen a tiny frog about the size of my middle finger nail sitting in one of these holes, so had guessed it might be a frog causing the eruptions at the surface.

The problem is how a frog small enough to get through a  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. hole can get enough food in the pot to grow to the size of the one which finally escaped - or do they eat dirt? Could anyone explain the phenomenon please?

N.T. Rossiter

TASMANIAN TIGERS

Watching the film of the Amazing Marsupials we saw some shots of the Tasmanian Tigers. The following is a small note on the subject from the North East Naturalist from Tasmania.

A Launceston man claimed to have seen a Tasmanian Tiger on the Ben Lomond Road, late last year. He was about 20 metres away from the animal which was spotted about 2pm....

A Thylacine, for exhibition in the Tasmanian Museum, Hobart has been manufactured from deerhide by the Museum preparator, Mr Des Barker, in 240 hours working to all available descriptive material.

--- Sightings of "Tasmanian Tigers" have also been reported in Victoria in the Portland area in one instance. Was it the Tantanoola Tiger from S.A.?



SHELL COLLECTING ON VICTORIAN SEA SHORES.

We must first understand that shells contain a living animal. This animal must live, feed and reproduce. It must defend itself against predators and contribute to the ecology of which it forms a part.

Shells are also called molluscs and are covered with a mantle or a structure called a periostracum. This covering will invariably match or blend with the surroundings.

In the interests of conservation we must confine our collecting of live shells to mature specimens - most handbooks on collecting and identification will give the average size of a full grown shell and having reached this size the animal within will be nearing the end of its life cycle.

It is only rarely that a good specimen will be found washed up on a beach. The exception will be when sea birds have been feeding. Good specimens of bi-valves are often found after birds have eaten the animal. Silver gulls in particular can open bi-valves without damage to the shell. Many other marine predators will destroy the animal without damaging the shell and these specimens may be found washed up on the shore, often with the two halves of the bi-valve still connected.

A search of the foreshore at low tide, of reefs, rock pools and other areas supporting seaweed and sea grasses will be the most rewarding.

Reefs and mudflats are the most prolific fields to search as both living molluscs and the shells from which the animal has been separated are more likely to be found in such places. Turn over stones in your search and lift seaweed, carefully replacing such objects as you proceed. Deep clefts in rock formations tend to trap shells and a careful sifting of the debris contained could result in a valuable find. Use a stick or a stone as a tool for broken glass or even broken shells can cause a severe wound. Carefully examine what may appear to be a stone covered with weed - it could be a shell.

On finding a damaged or incomplete shell do not discard it until you have found one more perfect.

The periostracum and marine debris adhering to the shell can often be removed by careful chipping, then rasping and finally by immersing in a container of a solution of 1/20 sulphuric acid. This does not usually harm the shell or the hard calcareous surface which can then be hand buffed.

Shells like the cowries (*Cypraea*) can easily be separated from the mantle which is part of the animal within the shell. To remove the dead animal wait a few days until it is dehydrated and then it will either fall out or can be picked out with a piece of wire. Be careful to retain the operculum. This is the hard base attached to the animal which it uses as a foot and to seal the aperture of the shell.

Try and obtain shells in pairs. Bi-valves of course are in pairs. A pair of univalves or two pairs of bivalves will add value and interest to your collection. Arrange shells grouped in their families. Avoid the mistake of having the best and most beautiful shells together. To a collector all shells are interesting and will be shown to greater advantage if arranged with system and care.

contd.....

SHELL COLLECTING contd...

Always keep a record of when and where a shell is found. This will indicate where other identical specimens can be found and will add interest when others view your collection.

Most shells that you will find can be identified in collectors handbooks such as - Shells of the Sea-shore by Dr D. McMichael - Marine Molluscs of Victoria by McPherson and Gabriel. These will give all the information required both for identification and the habits of the animal concerned.

Finally remember that indiscriminate collecting has seriously depleted the shell beds in some localities and some control must be exercised if the species is to survive.

Two localities in Westernport bay - the reef adjacent to the public caravan park at Coves and the reef and rock pools between Woolami and Newhaven once supported numerous Pheasant shells. Now specimens are rarely found.

The time may be near for some zones to be declared closed and protected. Although most shells have a wide distribution there are some localities where they can be found in greater numbers than others. This may vary a little with seasonal conditions but in general colonies of shells will remain constant if the ecology is undisturbed.

David Frost.

RARE SHELLS OF WESTERNPORT BAY.

Two of the worlds rarest shells have been found in Westernport bay.

1. Larinopsis turbinata

This shell has no common name. It is extremely unlikely that any collector will ever find this shell.

The only complete living specimen ever found was dredged from Westernport bay in a channel between French and Philip Islands. When taken and examined the animal was found to contain four hundred minute embryonic shells.

In appearance it is not unlike the bleached shell of the common garden snail. It is very fragile and several fragmented specimens have been recovered in the same locality. It must be one of the rarest shells in the world.

2. Trigoniidae (Brooch Shell)

Rare shells are not necessarily always the most beautiful, but the brooch shell is an exception. Usually a purple grey on its ribbed exterior this small bivalve is pearly and iridescent within. It is a favorite with jewellers.

Until a bed was discovered in Westernport bay it was thought to be extinct as it had only previously been found in fossils.

David Frost.



REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD FEBRUARY 25th 1975.

As always there was a large amount of correspondence regarding conservation. Publications received included N.L. Naturalist (Tasmania), The Clematis, a magazine from Baimsdale F.N.C. and ECOS a CSIRO Environmental Research magazine. These publications are available for members to look at any time.

PETTY CASH It was decided that amounts of petty cash be given as follows

1. Conservation Co-ordinator \$ 20.00
2. Secretary \$ 20.00
3. Miss J. Galbraith \$ 10.00

An amount of \$45.00 to be sent to St Pauls College, this is the amount collected from persons attending the campout.

F.N.C.A. subscription for 1975 to be paid.

MOE LIBRARY would like details of our club. Also requesting that we put a small display in the library some time. The Secretary will contact the librarian.

AUSTRALIAN NATURAL HISTORY MEDALLION . The committee is considering the list of nominations.

BARBECUE AT ARBORETEUM. This will be on Saturday April 12th at 11.00 am.

We will be meeting members of the Morwell Horticultural Society, who would like to see the arboretum and hear some of its early history.

It is anticipated that we would have lunch, walk around the trees with the members of the horticultural society and be able to leave for home in the early afternoon.

BOAT TRIP. This will be March 15th, decided that all money should be paid in advance. Final date for bookings would be February meeting.

SUBMISSIONS. Mrs Thompson read the submission that she would present to the Parliamentary Public Works Committee Loy Yang Inquiry.

We all agreed that it was an excellent submission.

All Club Submissions have been placed in a folder so that members may be able to see them at any time. Members to be encouraged to read these documents.

Correspondence with Traralgon Shire was also read as one of our letters had prompted some newspaper controversy. The Shire engineer had written a letter rather discrediting Field Naturalists.

Decided that this correspondence should be read at the General Meeting.

Next Committee Meeting will be held at the home of Mr and Mrs Thompson, Downies Lane, Traralgon South, on Tuesday March 18th at 7.30pm.

Supper Roster March 21st.

Mrs Branson

Mrs Sterkenburg

Annual Meeting. Members to bring 10 slides of Natural History interest to be shown. Mr Moretti will be in charge of the slide showing.

Please remember the election of office bearers, also that your SUBSCRIPTIONS are now due to be paid.

# Lalrobo Valley Naturalist

Details of contributing clubs are as follows:

## Lalrobo Valley F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs I. Peterson  
14 Barry Street,  
Morwell 3340 Tel 342129

General Meetings commence at 7.30pm on the 4th Friday each month  
at the Yallourn State School, YALLOURN.

## Sat. F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs K. Nowenham,  
P.O. Box 302  
Sale 650 Tel 441046

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month  
at the O. J. J. Rooms, Macarthur Street, SALE.

## Traralgon F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mr. J. Wall  
156 Kay Street,  
Traralgon 3844. Tel 741948

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month at the  
City Council Rooms, 100 St. John, TRARALGON.

## Warragul F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Brooks  
3 Naber Street,  
Warragul, 3820 Tel 21563

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month  
at the Albert Street State School, WARRAGUL.

Subscriptions payable to the Club may be sent to:

Mr. J. Wall,  
156 Kay Street,  
Traralgon 3844.

If transport is needed on excursions please contact Mrs Grant  
Tel. 622215.

The LALROBO VALLEY Naturalist is the official publication of the  
Lalrobo Valley Naturalist Club. It is a publication on any aspect of  
Natural History and should be sent to the members of the Club and should be  
addressed to:

Mr. J. Wall (J. Padfield)  
99 Charles Road,  
Traralgon 3844.





APRIL, 1975

ISSUE No. 136.



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COMING EVENTS

WARRAGUL F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday April 18th combined with L.V.F.N.C.  
Miss Dixon as the speaker.

Excursion:

Sunday April 20th.  
Contact Secretary for details

---

LATROBE VALLEY F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday April 18th  
Miss Joan Dixon " The role of the Museum  
Curator, a current approach".

Excursion:

Saturday April 19th

Meeting place:

Bridge over Morwell River near Boolarra  
at 10.00 am.  
Mrs Lyndon as leader.

Apologies for error in meeting place announced as Tarwin River bridge,  
it is of course the Morwell River bridge.

---

CUCKOO CASUALTY.

A terrific bang on the living room window one fine day this week sent us rushing to pick up the casualty, a young Fan-tailed Cuckoo, stunned, but still clutching an immature Saw-fly in its beak. My Spinning Gum relies on the birds to clean up the multitude of these pest caterpillars, they are apparently palatable when young and tender, although its doubtful if anything short of a Wedge-tailed Eagle could deal with full grown specimens. Luckily they never seem to reach that stage here. Unfortunately, both gum and sky are faithfully mirrored in the windows, resulting in an occasional error of avian judgement. Certain species of birds are attended by certain species of parasitic flies, and this was no exception. Identification is awaited from the National Museum.

E. Lyndon

BABY BIRDS

Still 'dead to the world' at 7am. one morning in January, I was wakened by a knock at the door. Opening it, I saw a young lady in dressing gown and night attire holding a goldfinch wrapped in a freshly ironed man's handkerchief. She had rescued the bird from her cat.

With the aid of an electric bootie lent to me to provide a warm bed for two seemingly untended baby Spinebills that had been brought to me on Christmas day, I was able to revive it to the extent that I am sure that all would have been well had not my dog pulled it, still in its improvised nest, onto the floor later in the day. The second frightening experience was too much for it. I regret to say.

The lady who had driven half way across the town at that hour of the morning to bring it to me has two very young children, and a husband to get off to work. She also came again the next day to inquire how the little bird had fared. (You can imagine how I felt about telling her what had happened... I almost wished that I could be a good liar.)

How lovely it is to find someone so thoughtful of the wild creatures about us instead of the all-too-frequent acts of cruelty and aimless destruction that so often come to our notice.

(The two little spinebills mentioned above apparently thrived for three weeks or so, then one suddenly died. The other was obviously very distressed by the loss of its mate; but it recovered and lived for perhaps a week longer, apparently well. Then it also died. Both birds were completely bald-headed when found and remained so until death, so it seems likely that they were victims of some disease.)

Honor Crane.



PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORTMARCH 1975

The Club has again had a successful year, once again increasing in new members and the club being active in many fields.

Our meetings and outings throughout the year have been very well attended.

We have been fortunate in the quality of our speakers to whom the club is deeply grateful.

We had a combined excursion on Foundation Day Weekend to Mt Tamboritha, the weather was not very pleasing but we had visitors from Ballarat and local areas to Bairnsdale.

During the year we had the pleasure, at two meetings, of Mr George Scanlan, the original editor of the Naturalist. I am happy to report that George received his Life Membership certificate at one of these meetings.

I would like to thank all members of the committee for their loyal support to me throughout the year and their hard work given willingly on behalf of the Club.

Our Secretary has been very successful and efficient in carrying out her secretarial work. The members that type, edit, address and post the Naturalist have also done a very tedious and painstaking effort in the Club's interest. This last year has been very heavy on all active members.

Our Conservation Co-ordinator, Mrs Thompson, has represented us at a hearing in the Little Theatre, Traralgon on the Loy Yang coal field project. There have also been other submissions to prepare, namely 3 submissions to the L.C.C. for Melbourne, East Gippsland and the Mallee; 2 submissions on the Thomson River Valley to the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works; 3 submissions to the House of Representatives at Canberra on Softwood Industry Agreement, Gippsland Lakes and Land-use Pressures on Scenic Amenities; 2 submissions to the Town and Country Planning Board re Central Gippsland Coal Deposits and the Gippsland Lakes; the Department of Lands re alternate reserves at Traralgon South and S.E.C. re Topsoil in the Loy Yang area. Many of our club members have also forwarded private submissions on the above issues.

In the conservation field our club has achieved a position of credibility and prestige that is recognised by government and semi government authorities.

T. Moretti

This report was read by the President at the Annual Meeting held 21/3/75.

---

LATROBE VALLEY FIELD NATURALIST CLUBBALANCE SHEET AS AT 28th February  
1975Cash Receipts.

Balance 1st March 1974		135. 52
Bank Interest	7.11	
Subscriptions * Membership	54.25	
* Magazine	<u>259.45</u>	313.70
Sale of Books		59.70
Photoflora		121.40
Collected at Campout	<u>45.00</u>	<u>546. 91</u>
(for St Pauls)		\$ <u>682. 43</u>

\* Subscriptions include payments in advance of \$ 29.00

Payments

Subscriptions	25.00	
Donations	5.00	
Naturalist Magazine	204.81	
Petty Cash - Secretary	40.00	
Publicity Officer	20.00	
Miss Galbraith	10.00	
Treasurers Expenses	5.25	
Books Purchased	57.75	
Photoflora	88.70	
Gift to Speaker (painting)	5.00	
Life Membership Certificates	21.00	
Donation to St Pauls (Campout)	<u>45.00</u>	527.51
Balance on hand 28th February 1975		<u>154.92</u>
		\$ <u>682.43</u>

Signed F. Miles

Hon. Auditor 16/3/75

WHITE-NECKED HERONS

During the trip up to the Campout we sighted ten White-necked Herons at a pond near Glenfalloch homestead.

I had seen three of these large birds - or perhaps I should say, one bird on three different occasions - near Morwell late in 1972. Since then I have not seen any in this area until early this month (February 1975), but there are quite a few around now.

About two hundred Straw-necked Ibis were grazing in the paddocks near the herons at Glenfalloch. We saw only one heron and twelve ibis on our return.

June Lubcke.



INLAND AUSTRALIA

Talk by Mr A. Ringin 28/2/75

Mr Ringin described himself as an incorrigible amateur who observes and admires nature. He did not mention his ability as a photographer whose excellent slides show nature at its best.

By means of his slides Mr Ringin took us on a fascinating trip through inland Australia. It commenced at the Olgas with the spectacular outcrops. When the Porcupine Grass is in seed the birds are attracted in huge numbers. It was a good season for wildflowers as shown by the scenic profusion on the roadsides and the delightful Pussytails. We even peeped across the Valley of the Wind inside the Olgas.

Mr Ringin likened Ayers Rock to a reposing cat and in the evening light and the red colouring it was resplendent. Many of the slides illustrated Mr Ringin's interest in the aborigines and in the history of early Australia. Everard Caves illustrated the way the aborigines painted one picture on top of another. King Canyon displayed the bottle-shaped nests of the swallows.

The Devil's Marbles are not just a few large boulders but continue across the countryside for approx. 20 miles (32 Km). Erosion has caused some of the marbles to be on top of stem-like sections of rock.

Of historic interest at Boullooia were the old corrugated-iron hotel and Roger Jose's two storey Tank House. There were several slides of the beautiful Berri Springs and the Jim Jim River was wide and picturesque when the slide was taken.

Interspersed among the scenic slides were close-ups of many native flowers of the areas. A lovely cream grevillea, a golden Grevillea juncifolia with feather-like leaves, the purple daisy Endiophyllum moideri, the tiny white water-lily Nymphodes indica and another that is yellow and only 1 in. across, the lovely red Brachychiton discolor and the red Grevillea wickhamii were some from the Berri Springs area.

Thousands of butterflies rosted in the shaded confines of the Caranbirini escarpment. Here one Grevillea is a low prostrate bush of no more than 45 cm high with pink flowers while another is a tree 9 metres high with red flowers 22 cm long.

Specimens of aboriginal rock pickings are made by striking a large rock surface with a sharp stone creating designs and images of animals etc.

By now we had moved to Amhem Land and the views of, and from, the escarpment were magnificent. Rock paintings here depicted a barramundi, a sailing ship, flying foxes and turtles.

The profusion of Sturt's Desert Pea (Chionochloa formosus) in the Flinders ranges had to be seen to be believed. Mr Ringin said there were five variations of Sturt's Desert Pea in the hundreds of acres over which it extended.

Mt Fitton is one of the two sources of talc powder in Australia. Only the 100 % pure talc is removed for economic reasons.

INLAND AUSTRALIAcontd.

With Cooper's Creek came memories of Burke and Wills. The big Coolibah tree and the monument to commemorate the explorers were photographed. The large areas of Nardoo (*Marsilea* family) that provided food for the explorers are now reduced to small patches. History records that Burk and Wills, and Howitt too, caught quantities of fish here, so Mr Ringin tried his luck and caught some Golden Perch and Turtles. Birdlife is prolific along the river. Corellas ring-barked branches of the trees and Mr Ringin suspects it is to provide future nesting sites after the limbs die and fall off.

The moving sand hills gradually creep around the plants, like *Senecio* and *Crotalaria*, until they are completely covered. Miles of Poached Egg Daisy and *Senecio splendens* make a beautiful sight. The Leopard Trees have very spotted trunks while the Curly-bark Mulga has bark that peels away like plane shavings curling into small rings giving an unusual effect.

Other areas visited were Turkey Creek with the lovely *metaleucas* and the 240 metre high cliffs; aboriginal caves at Victoria River; colourful Pinkerton Range. tungston mining at Mt Domeen; Bagot Creek; Ord River area and the Wolf Creek Crater which is 1.6 Km from rim to rim, 61 metres deep and 1.2 Km across the centre.

The beautiful inland flowers included the yellow *Hibiscus panduriformis*, the spectacular orange-flowered *Eucalyptus miniata*, the purple *Eremophila clarkei* and the red *Eremophila duttonii*, a wide expanse of Pusstails, the Corkwood (*Hakea lorei*) and the lovely pink long-stalked waterlilies, *Nelumbo nucifera*, near the Garambirini escarpment.

The final slide was an aerial view of Lake Eyre full of water. Mr Ringin's beautiful slides and interesting commentary left everyone with a desire to visit inland Australia.

Bon ThompsonMEMBERS SLIDES

At the meeting March 21st several members produced a wide variety of slides to entertain us all.

A sunrise commenced the show, the interest of Mr Moretti in the natural rock being used as a building material was evident in slides of churches and a mill. Flowers included Yanakie Berry, Coral Pea and Acacias.

Mrs Puckey showed the Point Roadknight area near Anglessea with interesting rock formations.

Slides by Mr Thompson illustrated the alpine flora. *Euphrasia*, *Helipterum*, *Senecio*, Sky-lilies, *Persilane*, *Richea Bogong-daisy* and *Oxalis*. Many of these species were seen at Tamboritha.

Mr Rowe brought us to Geology with several views of the Mt Warning area of Northern N.S.W. volcanic activity in this area was well illustrated.

Mrs McElroy showed CatsPaw, Pink Everlastibgs, Sturt Pea, *Clematis*, Grass-trees and Orchids in the Little Desert.

To Western Australia and the Murchison River and spectacular gorge and coastline made us all wish to visit there.

Pied Oyster-catcher, Stilts and a Mountain Devil concluded a most interesting evening of members slides.



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REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD MARCH 18th 1975Natural History Medallion

We are supporting the nomination of Dr Winifred Curtis of Tasmania.

Miss Dixon advised the title of her talk on April 18th.

"The role of the Museum Curator, a current approach".

A letter had been received by the secretary from Mrs Morrison thanking us all for the good wishes when she was in hospital.

Boat Trip. Decided that we would have this on March 22nd. Unfortunately this also had to be cancelled.

Decided that we would still need to purchase a new screen for the meeting room, as the work done on it cleaned the screen considerably but the showing of slides would be improved by a cleaner surface.

Mrs Lyndon had agreed to give a talk to the Headmasters Association April 4th. The subject is "How Field Naturalists Clubs can help the schools".

Exhibition in Moe Library

We have agreed to have a display from July 14th to August 1st. The theme of the display to be MORWELL NATIONAL PARK. This was agreed upon as many people in the Latrobe Valley do not know of the existence of a National Park in their area.

Supper for April meeting

Members bring a plate, all to help with supper duties.

Next Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday April 15th at the home of Mr and Mrs Puckey Broom Street Trafalgar. at 7.30pm.

Nominations were received for the vacant offices of the Club.

It was reported that 66,000 acres will be reserved adjacent to the Lakes National Park. 4,000 acres in Pines at Calignee, gullies to be left in their natural state. 26,000 acres in the Rosedale block to be reserved.

These are recommendations of the Land Conservation Council in the South Gippsland Study Area No 1. The Club and individual members have sent submissions regarding these areas.

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ANNUAL MEETING

Nominations received for the vacant offices were

President...	Mr Moretti
Vice President	Mr Thompson
Treasurer	Mrs Lubcke

As there was only one nomination for each position these were duly elected. Treasurers report received, also report of Car Sticker account.

Mr Lyndon gave a regime of the workings of the F.N.C.A. There is no doubt of sincerity of the people involved in this organisation, but how to keep the idea workable seems to be the problem.

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## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE ARBORETEUM.

Early 1962 : Mr J. Penny of the Morwell Horticultural Society suggested to the late Mr Parsons, president of the Society, that 25 acres of land adjoining the Hazelwood cooling pondage might be beautified by the Society if the S.E.C. approved.

Mr Parsons arranged a meeting between himself, Mr and Mrs McElroy (Mr McElroy was then treasurer of both the Horticultural Society and Latrobe Valley F.N.C.) and Mr Page (in charge of shire nursery) to discuss the project.

It was decided to plant an Arboretum of Australian trees and shrubs if the L.V.F.N.C. could co-operate, and after 3 meetings Latrobe Valley F.N.C. was invited to share in the planning and work of the arboretum. The club very gladly agreed to this.

July 1962: The plans were outlined in a letter to the S.E.C. The Commission approved the project and a meeting was arranged at what is now the Arboretum, but was then a sloping paddock with a row of old pine trees along the road.

January 1963: The meeting was held between representatives of S.E.C. (Mr Nye and Mr Endicott of the Forestry Division and Mr Hughston in charge of construction of the power station), presidents of the two clubs (Mr Parsons and Mr E. Faisst) and four members of L.V.F.N.C. including Mr McElroy who represented both the Society and F.N.C.

Mr Nye brought with him a tentative plan of a native arboretum divided by paths into 20 planting areas with indications of the height of trees to be planted in each. Mr Parsons was appointed to represent both clubs in further discussions with Mr Nye who provided lists of trees thought suitable for planting near the pondage. Trees were to come from several sources. Fifty pounds was given by Morwell Shire Council towards the cost, and the same amount by the late Miss Crommelin. Dr Eldridge then in charge of the Forest and Timber Bureau Research Station at A.P.M. Forests, offered a number of trees from the nursery there; several members offered to give or grow trees for planting, and the S.E.C. offered to buy the rest of the trees needed, to supply stakes for them, and to prepare the ground by rotary hoeing.

The Commission also undertook to mow the grass from time to time.

Later Mr Cudmore of Montrose gave us 200 young trees raised in his own garden. They were brought from Montrose by Miss Rossiter.

April 1963 : It was decided that the first planting should be at the end of June. It was finally done on July 2nd to 5th by Morwell school children supervised by members of the two clubs involved, following an opening ceremony by the Shire President. Between April and June much work was done, organising, preparing stakes etc. Plants procured were cared for at the shire nursery; the land was rotatory hoed, and much work was done at working bees and privately in printing metal labels showing the names of trees and shrubs, and attaching them to the stakes, putting the stakes in and preparing ground for planting. Groups put the stakes in, area by area, following the prepared plan on which numbers corresponded to the names on the stakes.

July 2nd -5th 1963: First Planting. A school teacher, the late Mr McCullough, organised the transport of 1600 school children to and from the pondage. They came in buses and entered the planting area in groups. Each group heard a short talk on native plants, birds and animals, and on fire prevention and was shown how to plant a tree; the four talks going on simultaneously, and the groups changing places each 10 or 15 minutes. Then each child planted a tree, watered it, and wrote his name on a penn-o-tag attached to the stake.



The quality of the planting varied greatly, and this was often reflected in the growth (or otherwise) of the trees. After the school planting a number of special trees were planted by members.

1964-65: was again a period of much hard work by members, many of us helped from time to time but the consistent hard work of a few members, especially Miss Rossiter, Mrs Jakobson, Mrs Branson and Mr Auchterlonie, saved the lives of many trees, while no one kept count of the hours Mr Parsons spent planning, working and organising. Many trees had to be replaced next autumn.

October 1965: Mr Parsons reported that about half of the replacement trees had been killed by rabbits or frost. Most losses were of very small plants, so Mr Croft (who followed Mr Page at the Shire Nursery) undertook to repot all the trees still unplanted and grow them on for a year to give them a better chance of survival. Pines along two boundaries were removed by the S.E.C. at this time and it was decided to plant a windbreak, three trees deep, of Melaleucas to replace them. Two hundred trees were grown from seed by Mr Parsons, pricked out when  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 inch high by Mr Auchterlonie and grown on by him in tins until 1 foot to 2 ft high, in readiness for spring planting. They were planted in September 1966. This necessitated a checking and often changing of names on the stakes as the original trees had often to be replaced by other species.

Spring-Summer 1966-67: Monthly working bees by a few members were continued all this time, and some members went at other times to weed and water the young trees. The survival of many trees is due to Mr Auchterlonie who kept a careful watch over them. Of late years the S.E.C. has continued to mow the Arboretum, a boat launching area has been fenced off and some other changes made, but there have been no more plantings. The trees are now established and at any season there are some to be seen in flower.

COMPILED FROM L.V.F.N.C. AND S.E.C. RECORDS AND MEMBERS ESPECIALLY MR McELROY'S REFLECTIONS by Miss Jean Galbraith.

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LATROBE VALLEY NATURALIST

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Mrs I. Peterson  
14 Barry Street  
Morwell 3840 Tel 342129

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Yallourn State School YALLOURN

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SALE F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary

Mrs K. Newenham  
P.O. Box 302  
Sale 3850 Tel 441046

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3 Nobel Street  
Warragul 3820 Tel 21563

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MAY, 1975

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# *Latrobe Valley Naturalist*



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MORE ABOUT MY 'FOSTER-SON' RING TAILED POSSUM (introduced to you by Iris Peterson in January L.V.Naturalist.

To refresh your memory, or 'put you in the picture' as the case may be, Possey (the affectionate little name that came to my lips when first handling this captivating little furry creature) was brought to me on 15th October, just as Iris and I were about to depart on a camping tour. The lad who brought him had found him with his dead mother.

He fitted comfortably into the palm of my hand and, size-wise, could have curled up just as comfortably in a soup spoon. Why, I simply cannot imagine, but I had him for five weeks before it even occurred to me to weigh him. He then weighed  $3\frac{1}{2}$  ounces (approximately 100 grams).

According to a book that I have recently read ("The Professor and the Possum", written by Professor H. Hunt, who had found and reared one about the same size as Possey), Possey may not have been old enough to have finally left his mother's pouch, as they normally weigh about 3 ounces when they do.

Iris told you that I fed him milk. I tried to -- per eye dropper, but it was not accepted. Possibly I had not diluted it in correct proportion. I had never even handled a baby possum until then, let alone try to feed one.

(Prof. Hunt also had trouble persuading his to take milk; but, with Mrs Hunt's help, finally succeeded. According to his information, baby ringtails continue to drink milk for about ninety days after final emergence from the mother's pouch, gradually taking to solid food.)

Rather worried by Possey's rejection of milk, I wondered what on earth I could give him (only known as 'it' at that stage). Then I thought to try apple (which we had on board), sliced paper thin. He loved it -- you should have seen the little pet sitting up on his hind legs and tail and holding it (with me) in his tiny 'hands' as he ate. Believe it or not, his tooth work could be heard all over the car -- not so much 'biting' as using his lower teeth as a grater, with upward movement. Then (again believe it or not) that wee scrap of animal life set to work to thoroughly wash his face and hands... yet human youngsters of far more advanced age and development are so hard to train in the washing habit!!!

Having reached our first camp (Halls Gap), I offered him honey on my finger. He appreciatively licked it off. Then to supply him with fluid, he was given (and accepted) honey and water -- just a little. Later, biscuit containing oatmeal and coconut was added and accepted. (soaked in the honey and water, that is.)

Although seemingly satisfied at the time, later experience of the amount of food consumed by him indicates that he was probably under fed during his early weeks under human care.

On our trip, Iris, being driver, was supposed to have been relieved of kitchen duties (as I had been on a previous trip with her and Miss Jean Galbraith). Unfortunately for her, although a great lover of animals she cannot bear to touch them; so, as soon as the tent was erected (requiring two of us), my first concern had to be to feed the baby, leaving Iris to temporarily carry on with camp chores that should have been mine.

MY POSSUM

contd....

On our wind-up night at the motel, when circumstances led us to share a double bed, poor Iris graciously conceded that Possey could come in too - but I did make sure that he ( in his perforated ice-cream carton with kleenex tissue bed) was kept well to the far side from her. On his first two nights with us, his box had been on the floor beside my li-lo; but, when he showed signs of feeling the cold, I decided that, even though he had to be moved from side to side when I turned over, sharing my sleeping bag was the only sure way of keeping him warm. In his box, he continued to sleep with me at home -- until I decided, after two or three weeks, that it was not fair to deprive him of exercise during the normal activity hours of a nocturnal animal, even though he had been given periods of exercise during daytime; so I took him to bed minus his box, though fearful lest I should roll on to him in my sleep.

On the first two or three nights he, as far as I know, remained in bed all night, cuddling up to me most of the time. Then, with initial encouragement from me, he began to have periods of obvious enjoyment scuttling up and down ropes that I had erected, and across a wall-to-wall bar to which ropes led ( having negotiated once or twice, he would invariably stop and look down at me with an expression that clearly said, "Doing pretty well, aren't I, Mum?") while I followed my usual practice of reading for a while ( between intervals of watching him) before sleeping. But almost as soon as I had turned off the light, I'd feel little feet heading for the loose bed-clothes beside my neck; then he would creep in beside me.

After a further two or three weeks, he began to spend more time out and about, but only after I had gone to sleep(except for his initial play activity period that I was obviously expected to watch or even take part in); but he was always back in bed, well settled and usually asleep, when I woke in the morning.

Then came a heat wave, and after the second hot night I woke to find my bed mate missing. He had wriggled a slight hollow in the top of a sun-blind that was standing in a corner between wardrobe and wall, and was curled up therein. As it was a never-been-used blind, I provided a substitute nest on top of it (a plastic basket resembling a flower-pot), containing crumpled paper.

Next night, I was wakened off and on by the sound of tearing paper- long r-r-r-i-ips, because Possey was making use of protective covering that I had put on top of the wardrobe and anchored down by laying boards over the edges. He could not free the paper, so he tore it away - with long rips that had penetrated my sleep. Next morning he was asleep in his new nest, carefully covered (night chill having returned) with a two-foot by one-foot (30by60 cm) piece of old curtain that I had left on the floor as a play thing, five feet below his nest.

On the following night I found him with a four foot (approx 1.2 m.)length of string looped in about six to eight inch(15 to 20 cm.), reasonably uniform lengths, back and forth between his tightly curled and very rigid tail and his 'bottom'; but with one end of it still knotted around the previously mentioned play-rod ( I had used it to secure suspended play hoops whose hooks tended to bounce off the rod when Possey swung on or sprang onto the hoops too boisterously, causing a few falls). As the attached end was too high for me to untie, I gently disengaged the looped string from the tail/body hold, and left it hanging. Next morning it was gone, tied-on section and all - into his nest.

Honor Crane

The second part of this article will be published in June L.V.Naturalist. Ed.



EXCURSION WITH MRS LYNDON

Saturday 19th April was a rather dull morning but still 13 cars assembled at the appointed meeting place, for our excursion.

We travelled along the Midland Highway towards Budgerie, reaching the crest and turning along Townsend's road to see the view in the valley below. Mrs Lyndon could not control the weather so we could not see much except fog and mist. The convoy stopped further along Townsend's road, overlooking Latrobe Valley and the valley of Morrell's Hill. We could see a little more through the mist by now. Mr and Mrs Lyndon told us amusing stories of their days as farmers in this district. We went for a short walk along this road but wind and rain soon had us back in the cars ready to drive on.

The drive was along Prosper Valley Road to Morwell River Road stopping at Prinrose Park beside the Morwell River. Through the township of Boolarra, along Limonite road, Fishers road then into a forest track, negotiating the dips and bends within the forest.

Lunch was had on a pleasant green flat on the property of Mr Morgan. It was raining lightly by this time so most of us lunched in our cars where it was dry. Presently Mr Morgan came down to see us and tell us of the efforts of a group of local people in getting the small area of forest we had driven through as a reserve. At present they have been successful, but more effort will be needed to stop further indiscriminate timber getting in the area. Most of the members could appreciate some of this small groups frustrations.

Several members walked into the forest but wet feet etc. sent them back to the cars and homewards. We had all had a most interesting day thanks to the preparation by Mrs Lyndon and as she had no control over the weather, we could again travel this route on a more pleasant day to enjoy this countryside.

L. Padfield.

---

POWERFUL OWLS

It was a hot summer day and I had walked a good half mile along a farm boundary fence in the course of work. Thinking of the long steep climb back to the road I decided to briefly enjoy the deep shade of a clump of blackwoods growing in the bush outside the fence.

Sitting on a shaded rock I noticed the undergrowth was splashed with bird droppings. My immediate reaction was to look above where, about 7 metres from the ground, perched two Powerful Owls rather nervously viewing my presence.

We observed each other for several minutes then the two large birds rather hastily departed, their powerful wings taking them effortlessly out of sight further up the gully.

It is said these birds live on possums and gliders but I suspect many an unwary rabbit would fall victim to their strong talons and beaks.

The amount of droppings seemed to indicate the blackwoods were a favourite perch but an investigation of the ground beneath revealed no bones or other remnants of any meals they may have had.

O. Thompson.

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MOROKA RIVER CAMP OUT.

Twelve members including four children in three cars left Traralgon at 8 am. Saturday morning for a place called the Horse Yards, situated on the Moroka River past Licola, 180 Km from Traralgon. The weather was fine and warm. On the way there were seen approximately fifty King Parrots feeding in a ploughed field and twenty Wood Ducks on a dam.

The Horse Yards is a grassy area beside the river, covered with patches of Snow Gum s and is used for mustering cattle. Camp was made by lunch time, and afterwards members in two cars drove further on to the Pinnacle where a fire watching tower is set on the peak with steep cliffs on the three sides. Reasonable views of the Wonnangatta River and surrounding mountains could be seen.

Members had an enjoyable evening around the camp fire and finished the night by spotlighting around the area. The only wildlife sighted were some Ring-tailed Possums and six Little Pied Cormorants. Plenty of evidence of Wombats was about, but they showed greater judgement than the members by staying inside on such a cool night.

The following morning we awoke to a frost. Some people take cleanliness too far, as one member was sighted carrying a frozen stiff face cloth down to stream for a wash!

It was decided to break camp mid morning so a hike could be made to the top of Trap Yard Hill. This entailed a walk of 1.7 Km --- up. Beside the track was found a Waxberry (*Gaultheria appressa*), then to the top where good views were had of Mt Wellington and the Wellington Plain which runs in the direction of Lake Tarli Karng. Members returned to the cars for lunch. A Banksia canefoli was found near Bennison Lookout on the way home from a very enjoyable weekend.

John Stott.  
Traralgon F.N.C.

The Australian Senate Standing Committee on Social environment is investigating the woodchip industry. Written submissions from interested persons and organisations expressing views on the subject should be addressed to

The Secretary,  
Standing Committee on Social Environment, The Senate,  
Parliament House, CANBERRA, A.C.T. 2600.

Submissions should be sent before June 13th 1975 if possible. As this is a matter which concerns us all, please give it serious thought.

The club will be sending submissions but individual members may like to send their own submissions.

SUBSCRIPTIONSSUBSCRIPTIONSSUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions are now due. Please send to the Treasurer as soon as possible.

Family Member \$ 3.50      Single Member \$3.00  
Naturalist only \$2.50

If your subscription which falls due in March is overdue 3 months you will no longer be eligible to receive the Naturalist.



REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD APRIL 15th 1975

Letters received from the Premier and Minister for Lands assuring us that the L.C.C. will not be abolished before its present work is completed. This was in reply to letters regarding the Bland Report into the Public Service.

Report from Mrs Lyndon about her talk to the Headmasters association at the Woorabinda Camp recently.

David G. Stead Memorial Wildlife Research Foundation of Australia have sent details of publications offered by them.

Report of the Parliamentary Public Works Inquiry was received. This will be circulated around members.

Car Stickers. Decided that in future any clubs ordering car stickers will be required to pay postage.

Reported that the barbeque at the Arboretum was very successful. Mrs Lyndon labelled several trees with their names for easier recognition.

A working bee in the future to clean up trees, broken branches etc seemed to be a much needed activity.

Supper Roster May 23rd.

Next Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday 20th May at the home of Mr and Mrs Lubcke 122a Helen St. Morwell. All interested members welcome at these meetings.

PUBLICATIONSYOUR AUSTRALIAN GARDEN SERIES.

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enclosing Cheque/ Money Order/ Postal Note to cover cost and postage.

Latrobe Valley Naturalist

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JUNE, 1975

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COMING EVENTS

TRARALGON F.N.C.

Meeting: Friday 4th July  
Mr T. Moretti Bees - their environment  
Excursion: Saturday 5th July  
with Mrs Burnet, Glengarry West.  
more details from Secretary

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WARRAGUL F.N.C.

Meeting: Friday 20th June  
Mr K. Stephens, Illustrated talk on the  
Gulf of Carpentaria.  
Excursion: Sunday 22nd June  
Details from Secretary

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LATROBE VALLEY F.N.C.

Meeting: Friday 27th June  
Meteorologist, R.A.A.F. Sale  
Excursion: Saturday 28th June to the Sale area.  
Meeting Place Lake Guthridge (Sale) 10.00 am  
behind Police Station.  
Meeting Place after lunch Lake Guthridge at 1.00 Pm when the  
Met. Officer will be with us.

Please bring any instruments, thermometers, barometers etc.  
also pencil and paper. We will be doing weather observations outdoors.

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THE ROLE OF THE MUSEUM CURATOR -- A CURRENT APPROACH

Address by Miss J. Dixon 19/4/75

Miss Dixon commenced her address by explaining the three main aspects of work in the National Museum of Victoria. The display function of the Museum is evident to all visitors. The research work is done amongst the research specimens and in the field. The educational section endeavours to assist teachers who bring groups of children to the Museum.

Mr Pescott, recently Director of the Botanical Gardens, wrote a chronological report of the history of the National Museum of Victoria. The museum collections commenced in 1854 and Prof. F. McCoy of the University of Melbourne became Director in 1858. In the early days of the museum, collections were mainly gathered through purchase and expeditions. From 1854-59 William Blandowski was zoologist at the museum. During this time he collected much important data and material. A later expedition in 1894 - the Horn Expedition to Central Australia - involved Professor W.B. Spencer, Professor of Zoology and later Director of the museum.

A large part of the early collections went to overseas museums, particularly the British Museum (Nat. Hist.). The National Museum of Victoria is fortunate in that it has built up a large historical collection.

Today there are seven curatorial departments within the museum. Work of the Vertebrate Department includes

1. Identification and documentation of the research collections.
2. Research (a) on the collections by (i) museum staff  
(ii) other research workers including graduate students and scientific personnel.  
(b) in the field.

With so many environmental studies being carried out, museum staff are busy collecting information and preparing reports. Miss Dixon is involved with work for the L.C.C. (especially field work in the alpine areas), Forest Commission and several other Government departments. At the moment the Alpine Area has priority.

3. Publications, in scientific journals and in reports. Environmental research shows the emphasis which must be placed on certain aspects of faunal conservation.

Miss Dixon then showed slides commencing with a very complete series on the rare Mountain Pygmy Possum and also many slides of her recent overseas trip.

The Mountain Pygmy Possum slides showed a distinguishing feature of the fur extending some way down the prehensile tail. This little animal is very dependent on the specific environment for its food of insects, pea flowers and their pods and is at the mercy of its predators. So we must try to protect the habitat it frequents. Specimens of this species, *Burrmys parvus*, are held in the museum.

Several habitats where mammals can be successfully trapped for research purposes showed the reasonable amount of cover amongst the granite boulders necessary for the survival of many species of fauna. Miss Dixon also brought along specimens and display material. There were live specimens of the Common Bush Rat and the uncommon Broad-tooth Bush Rat for members to compare.



THE ROLE OF THE MUSEUM CURATOR

contd

In 1974 Miss Dixon spent six weeks on an overseas vacation and attended the 1st International Mammology Congress in Moscow. One of the objects of Miss Dixon's visit, besides the conference, was also to look at landscape as she is on the Landscape Classification Committee for the National Trust. She also presented a copy of her book Kangaroos to the Lenin Library in Moscow. The conference was wide ranging and very worthwhile. As part of the agenda delegates were taken to inspect some true Northern Steppe flora and the Oka Terrace State Reserve.

Miss Dixon endeavoured to visit as many overseas museums as possible to inspect their collections of Australiana. The collections of Australiana in Leningrad museum were suprising in their wide scope and include the thylacine, *Thylacinus cynocephalus*. Stockholm, Berlin and other European museums visited had large collections of Australian mammals. So also did those in the U.S. although they were of more recent origin.

One result of the overseas visit is that there is a demand for exchanging specimens with other museums. To this end it would be helpful if we could let the museum have any good dead specimens of mammals we may find, or any skulls, etc., so that they can be used for exchange purposes.

Miss Dixon closed with the remark that the old idea of the curator of a museum department being isolated and becoming very proficient in one particular subject only, has given way generally to the more modern procedure of going out into the field and therefore becoming more involved with studies, people and policies.

Bon Thompson.

SNAKES ALIVE

After seeing a snake in the top of a 1 metre high *Coprosma* bush in the Morwell National Park nicely curled around a couple of times last year (Feb 74) one now goes about ones walks with eyes "up" as well as "down".

March this year while in East Gippsland I came very close to "standing" on a large snake near a blackberry bush. There were no small birds about to give a warning. The Blue Wrens drew our attention to the one in the Park. A few days after seeing the large snake the small birds were making quite a noise and flying in and out of coastal tea-tree. Going closer to identify the birds and see what the fuss was about we saw a black snake of about 76cm long making his way along in the tea-tree 2-3 metres from the ground. He was left to go about his business.

The next encounter came 4 days later while walking along a track in tea-tree. We had stopped to look at birds which were quite noisy when I looked to my left and there on the ground beside me curled up was a Python. I could not see his head or tail. It was patterned with green diamonds or triangles on a dark grey body. He was walked around and on our return later in the afternoon was still in the same place as before. He only moved when a Banksia was thrown at him. He may be still there curled up - who knows!

Heather Christensen.

MORE ABOUT MY 'FOSTER SON' RING TAILED POSSUM

contd Part 2

How did he manage to arrange it in those loops, one wonders! His curled tail was so rigid that I doubt that I could have uncurled its iron like rigidity. (Prof. Hunt says that carrying between tail and 'bottom' is the normal method of transporting nesting material.)

Since then, my bed is only entered occasionally, the little fellow's own nest now being his usual refuge and resting place when day light returns... until I disturb him, that is. During the day, he is transferred to the nest that I have provided in a bird-cage - just in case he should wake and wander through open doors to meet with harm (on a hot stove, for instance); but before going into it, he likes to share my morning cup of tea, from which a few spoonfuls (6 or 8) are transferred to his own little bowl. Stale or cold tea is not acceptable, or was not until recently: now he is not so particular. I have seen him drink plain water, although it has been offered to him repeatedly, and is always provided.

From the very beginning he was house trained. Even when tiny (more readily then than now, in fact) he has done as required when put out onto the ground after waking from his daytime sleep, just before I went to bed, and in the morning usually after his drink, except when he was very small. The size of the resulting pool or stream was amazing. When smaller, he habitually obliged almost immediately but now there may be a considerable wait - perhaps up to half an hour, or even longer; but patience is eventually rewarded. Recently, I have reduced the exercise to once a day (after his daytime sleep), having read Prof. Hunt's book that such is the normal habit; but I am sure that it was required more often when he was younger - the response was always so prompt and so productive.

Even now, the once-a-day rule does not always apply; but there is a sand and kitty litter filled tray indoors - which is used on occasions. Only occasionally (two or three times at most, I think) has my floor suffered (apart from little black pellets that are easily swept up,) and my bed, never - from either excretion nor was his, except when he was tiny and could not get out - rarely even then.

The urine had always been clear and seemingly colourless, so when 'cloudy orange' fluid appeared on one occasion (the first of odd ones), I was fearful that I had given the little fellow food that disagreed with him; but urine from the next urination was clear again. Then, one day, when on the table, he began to move along deliberately dragging his 'bottom' on the surface - in a slightly zig-zag motion, whilst leaving a narrow trail of orange tinted fluid. It dawned on me that this was probably his territory marker. This, he did leave on the floor at times, and still does on 'his' wardrobe next to his nest - very frequently on the latter; though I suspect that, although the toilet tray on the wardrobe obviously receives use, the stains on the paper surrounding it and covering the wardrobe are not all territory markings. I assume that the slightly zig zag motion is merely the result of alternate leg movement with 'bottom' pressed to the ground rather than being deliberate.

The comments and conclusions regarding territory marking are, of course, merely my own, arising from day to day observations. Either confirmation or denial of their accuracy would be appreciated.

Prof. Hunt says that the male's toilet habit regarding fluid excretion is the above-mentioned dragging, zig zag motion; but I am inclined to disagree, because Possey always remains stationary during his supervised urine excretion.

contd..pp4



MORE ABOUT MY POSSUM

contd...

for this operation, he is now put under a bottomless bird cage - a practice introduced when he reached the stage of possibly darting beyond range of torch light, thus being hard to locate. I sometimes remove the restraining cage as soon as urination begins, yet he remains 'as was' until he is finished- which, I think, tends to uphold my conclusion.

About a fortnight ago, he did what I knew must happen sooner or later- broke through the fly wire over the sleepout louvres and escaped.

Of course I spent an anxious day on his behalf; but soon after dark I managed to locate him, thanks to my little dog's nosing and tail wagging attitude, - under a forty-four gallon drum mounted on bricks. The situation indicated that he was probably responding to my call when Dog Tess's approach sent him back to a place of refuge.

He certainly seemed very relieved to be back in my safe keeping, and appeared to be somewhat upset by his experience- even refusing an offering of his favourite item of diet (rose petals) until he had partaken of a drink of honey sweetened tea. Possibly this familiar taste of home helped to allay any upset that his adventure had aroused.

Although back and front garden taps both have water bowls beneath them, and my garden contains a variety of plants including acceptable forms of diet, he appeared to be in need of both food and drink - so is apparently not ready to fend for himself. My nightly food offering, by the way, is a trayful of apple leaves (2 or 3 clusters), prunus leaves (2 or 3 small sprays), four or five roses (fortunately those about to fall, and freshly fallen petals are acceptable), a few youngish rose leaves and a piece of apple. A few young peppermint gum leaves (a natural food) are now included when available. He also likes lemon peel (sometimes given as a change) but rose suckers and prunus-suckers do not appear to suit his fancy - not as a preference, anyhow. By morning there is very little left except stems... so now you know why I have reached the conclusion that my charge was under fed in the early weeks of my care, when I only supplied food in proportion to his size. Mr Roberts, local Fisheries and Wildlife Officer says that variety is important. The law does not permit me to care for a wild native animal without notifying him, of course.

After waking for the night, Possy is shut in my sleep-out, having first had his drink of tea and his toilet visit of course. If I am very tardy in joining him, he either waits at the door step (or beats me to it when he hears me coming) or comes hurrying to meet me as soon as I enter. If he has not been alone for very long he is not so eager, but usually comes when I call - although less often now than when younger, when he seldom failed to do so (I can't recall that he ever did, though he sometimes delayed his coming for a while). Over the last week or so (at the beginning of April) his eagerness seems to have increased, even if my absence has been only of short duration. One night he was even clinging to the door handle.

He loves to run up and down a hand-held rod, from my hand to the fixed rod above, or to a window ledge, or to a rope recently suspended beside the curtains in the hope that it will be climbed instead of then (proving reasonably successful), then back to my hand to lick it, or bite it as a kitten would, sometimes quite hard and painfully now that he is bigger and stronger;

contd....pp5

MORE ABOUT MY POSSUM

© ntd..

but I am sure th at he does not mean to hurt, except perhaps on odd occasions wh en our wills clash -- he is developing a little will of his own.

He frequently licks my hand, or my arm, or any part of me th at is available - som etimes, I believe, just affectionately, but I suspect that the taste of salt is more often the attraction.

Th is morni ng I was awakened at four o'clock- by Possy sitting on my forehead and washing my face very thoroughly and diligently. I made an effort to let him finish the job, just to see how far he would go; but I was almost deterred by the thoroughness- rather than- gentleness with which he dealt with the corners of my eyes. When he started on my lips I held them tightly together; but he persisted, the roughness again taking precedence over gentleness. When he tried to deal similarly with reachable areas inside nostrils and ears, I had other ideas - that was a little too much to take.

I'd h ate him to know it, but the moment his back was turned I treated eye and lip areas with tissues moistened by my own tongue- wondering, the while, whether mine was any more hygienic than his; but, having been very late going to sleep, I did not feel like visiting the bathroom at such an early hour.

Such are the joys of acting as foster parent to one of God's bush creatures. (But who would be without them- or have them behave otherwise ?)

Honor Crane.POLITE POSSUM.

At Twenty Acre Creek on the road from Licola, we met up with a New Australian couple who were interested in a possum's nest. They asked us about it.

Mr New Australian, at Eric's suggestion, gave the tree a shake and out popped the possum, looking down at us with such a polite " Yes, what can I do for you"? expression on its face.

That couple were enchanted - they had never seen an Aussie Ring-tail before. He needless to say, soon recognised us for the rude i ntruders that we were and with great dignity retired back to bed.

June Lubcke.WINGAN INLET

Three or four days spent at Wingan Inlet failed to produce "new" birds. and the "Highway" into it - well I don't think words could describe it but the wild flowers which were out in bloom made up for the other things. The rare trigger plant Stylidium laricifolium was in bloom. There were mauve flowers of Paterersonia - the wild iris, and white flowers of Butterfly Flag Diplarrhena while the Flying Duck orchids were thick down the centre of a car track leading to Lake Elusive, a fresh water lake. These and quite large areas of Boronia and Wedding bush were a few of the many out in bloom during late October 1974.

Heather Christensen.



REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD MAY 20th 1975.

Working Bee at Arboreteum. Decided that in conjunction with Morwell Garden Club we should tidy up broken branches of the trees and generally clean up around the trees before any further planting took place. A date was suggested but since was found to be not suitable to M.G.C. members. We will try for another date.

Seminar Latrobe Valley. Our Valley Our Future is the title of a Public Seminar to be held Saturday June 21st. 1975. Admission is free, and has been well advertised locally. Mrs Thompson will represent L.V.F.N.C. on one of the panels. Several other committee members hope to attend. Please give this day some thought.

P.M.G. postal regulations. We have received the most recent copy of the regulations. To the best of our knowledge we are complying with them.

Bonaseed Questionnaire. We had received a questionnaire from the Geelong F.N.C. regarding this plant which is becoming a menace in their area. Bonaseed has been grown as a garden plant for it has an attractive yellow flower. We have one copy of the questions but more information can be obtained from J.R. Wheeler, 72 James St. Belmont 3216.

Morwell Library is now the Regional Centre for obtaining films from the State Film Centre. Catalogues and film lists available from them.

C.C.V. Newsletter received with details of Victorian Conservation Prize.  
A.C.F. Newsletter received. These documents are tabled at General Meetings.

Arrangements for the excursion June 28th finalised. Details printed on front cover of Naturalist.

Much correspondence concerning meetings and events already past at the meeting.

Regional Employment Development Scheme. Member bodies and individuals are asked to suggest suitable work in this scheme. Have you any suggestions?  
Write to local councils with suggestions.

Dr N. Hallam is unable to attend our meeting in August, he will be overseas. Alternative speakers were considered and details will be announced as soon as there is confirmation from our alternatives.

Public meeting in Sale to discuss Lake Guthridge was discussed, apparently it was a well attended meeting. There was a protest about the removal of River Redgums from Thomson River area. Approximately 20 trees were saved from the axe as the result of prompt action by Sale F.N.C. members. Congratulations Sale members.

Agreed that the club would send a submission to the Senate Standing Committee on Social Environment. Woodchip Inquiry. Mrs Thompson had prepared the submission which was read to all present, and agreed that it was acceptable.

Supper Roster was discussed, as there has been a great lack of volunteers on the list. Would we discontinue supper? Conscript volunteers? The situation is not satisfactory at present. Have you any suggestions.  
June 27th. Mrs Padfield Mrs Peterson.

Next meeting of the Committee will be held on Tuesday June 24th at the home of Mr and Mrs McElroy 35 Latrobe Road Morwell at 7.30 pm.

Warragul F.N.C. has introduced a supporting member for their club. This can be obtained at a cost of \$1.00 per year to make up numbers when required.

Latrobe Valley Naturalist

LATROBE VALLEY NATURALIST

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Details of contributing clubs are as follows.

LATROBE VALLEY F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs I. Peterson  
14 Barry Street  
Morwell 3840 Tel 342129

General Meetings commence at 7.30pm on the 4th Friday each month at the  
Yallourn State School YALLOURN

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SALE F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary

Mrs K. Newenham  
P.O. Box 302  
Sale 3850 Tel 441046

General Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month at the  
C.W.A. Rooms, Macarthur Street SALE

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TRARALGON F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary

Mr J. Wall  
156 Kay Street  
Traralgon 3844 Tel. 741948

General Meetings commence at 8.00 pm on the 1st Friday each month at the  
City Council Reception Rooms TRARALGON

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WARRAGUL F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Brooks  
3 Nobel Street  
Warragul 3820 Tel 21563

Meetings commence at 8.00 pm on the 3rd Friday each month at the  
Albert Street School WARRAGUL

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Subscriptions payable to the Honorary Secretary Treasurer

Mrs Lubcke  
122a Helen Street  
Morwell 3840

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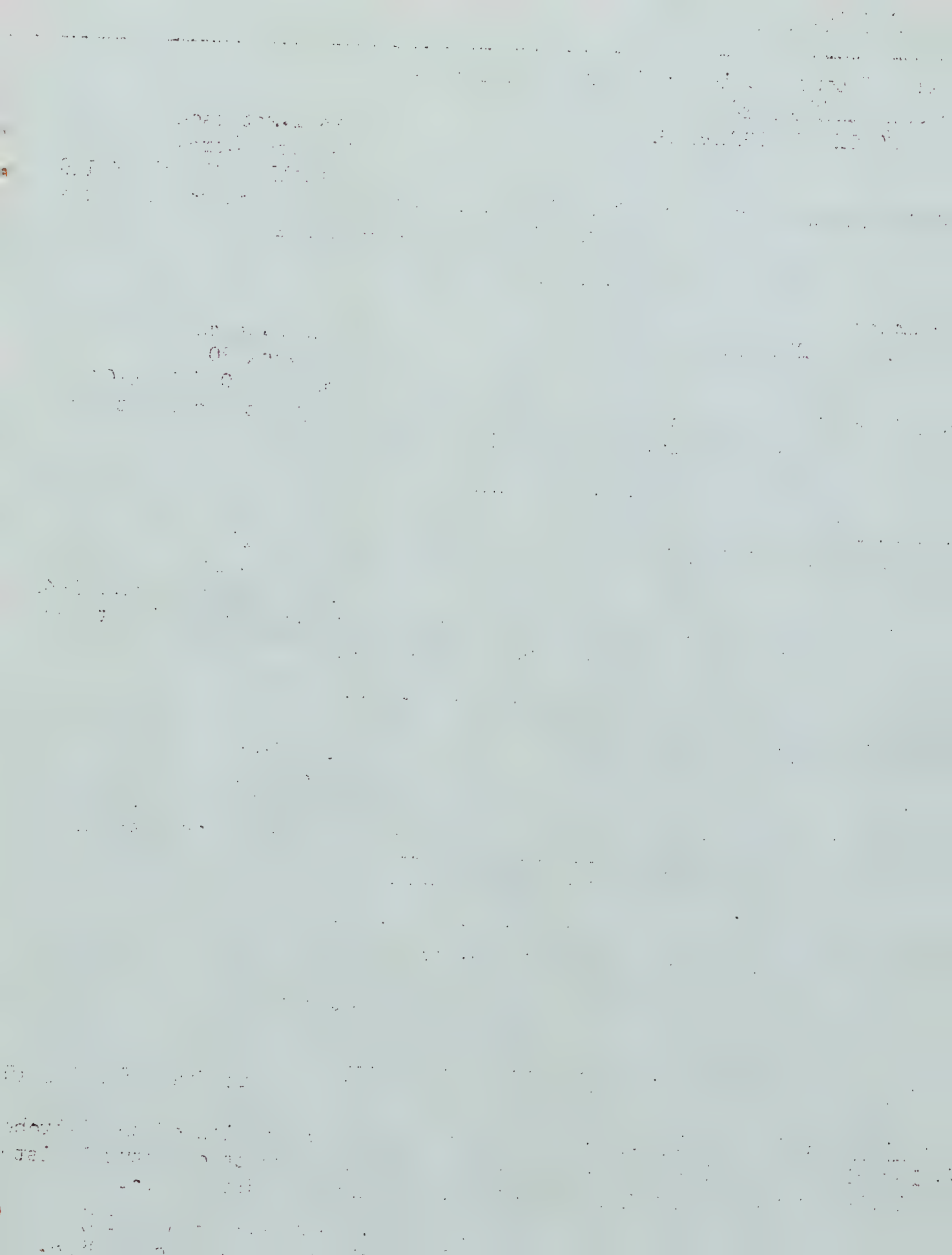
If transport is needed on excursions please contact Mrs Crane Tel 622215.

The LATROBE VALLEY NATURALIST is the official publication of the Latrobe Valley Field Naturalist Club. Contributions on any aspect of Natural History are invited from members of all clubs and should be addressed to:

Honorary Editor (Mrs L. Padfield)  
99 Chamberlain Rd, Newbrough 3828.


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JULY, 1975

ISSUE No. 139.



# *Latrobe Valley Naturalist*

**Protect and enjoy**

**20c.**

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COMING EVENTS

WARRAGUL F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday July 18th      Members night

Excursion:

Sunday 20th July

Contact Secretary for details.

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LATROBE VALLEY F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday 25th July

Workshop night with Mr and Mrs Thompson

"Heaths"

Excursion:

Saturday 26th July to Whitelaw's Track

Meet at Traralgon South Reserve at 10.00am

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Display in Moe Library July 14th - 1st August Please see it.

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L.V.F.N.C.

TRARALGON F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday 1st August

Film Night

Excursion:

Den of Nargun

Contact Secretary for details.

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Mr Alan Reid of the A.C.F. will speak at the Environmental Education Series being held at Grey St. School Traralgon at 8.00 pm Wednesday 23rd July.

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ALTERATION TO L.V.F.N.C. MEETING JULY 25th.

Mr Ian Smith will speak on the subject

"NEW DIRECTIONS IN NATIONAL PARKS"

Excursion July 26th will be to the MULLUNDUNG STATE FOREST

Meeting place to be the same as already published i.e. Traralgon South.

The program previously arranged will take place in August.

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EXCURSION TO SEE THE THOMSON RIVER PROJECT.

It was a perfect autumn day for an excursion to the Thomson River project on May 24th. A very good attendance assembled in Albert Street Moe and some people were shifted to other cars to have as few cars as possible on the road. After we met the leaders of the excursion, Mr N. Robins of Melbourne and Mr Currie one of the speakers of the night before and 13 cars left Moe, winding their way through the hilly country via Erica to Parker's corner, where more cars were waiting to join the procession. In 20 cars we set off to our first stop, the place where Amor's farm had been a few miles past Erica.

Mr Robins explained to us that there is nothing to be seen of the former settlement except from the air. The forest regrowth is practically all wattle and is clearly visible from the air. "Amor's" will probably be the place, where a new small township of 100 to 150 houses for families of construction workers will be built on the right side of the road and there will be a caravan park on the left handside of the road, accommodating about 60 caravans. A short distance further on there will be a camp for single men, accommodating about 400.

The question was asked "Why should not Erica be used instead of a new township?" The reason for that is, after completion of the project practically all the people will leave again and Erica would be left with a lot of empty houses. At Amor's, the houses could probably be removed, and the caravan park might become a place for tourists, or the whole place might become a tourist attraction like the Snowy but on a smaller scale. Many of the plans for this project are still subject to possible changes. The environmental studies will be finished next year and after that more concrete plans will be made.

I personally feel, that as much as possible is already done to come to a compromise with all the bodies interested in the future of this State.

Our next stop was just past Talbot Creek where there is an open view over the Thomson River Valley on the right. A bright green clearing over the river is Beardmore's with the Aberfeldy river out of sight behind the first ridge.

From where we were standing, a straight line to Beardmore's crosses the future damsite. A small clearing in the bush shows the place, where the spillway will be built. The proposed dam will be about 500 ft high. Where we were on Thomson River Road, the contour line shows 2500 ft and the damsite is on the 1000 ft mark, so we were standing about 1000 ft above the crest of the proposed dam.

A small clearing is visible in the direction of the damsite. That clearing will be about 50 ft above the highest water level of the reservoir and will form a small peninsula in the artificial lake.

In the reservoir an intake tower has to be built. It will be 300 ft high so water in the reservoir will not be taken from the surface, nor from the bottom, but inbetween. The water at the surface has too much algae, the water at the bottom lacks oxygen, so in the middle it is "just right".

The next stop was Rocky Knob, elevation 3000 ft, so we had climbed another 500 ft. Originally the Rocky Knob Hut was there. This hut has been removed and the little open clearing now has a sign from the Forest Commission "Blue Gum, Otway Messmate, planted 1974". So far so good. One of our most athletic members scaled the steep slope hoping to find a sign of the young messmates, but the bracken ferns, about 5 ft tall, made a "mess of the messmates" and not one could be found.

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EXCURSION TO SEE THE THOMSON RIVER PROJECT.

contd....

On the right hand side of the road we had a different view of the damsite. We could see it now from the North-west direction. The area was pointed out to us where a small dam in the Aberfeldy River will be built, connected by a diversion tunnel to the Thomson. In this way part of the water of the Aberfeldy River will come into the Thomson reservoir above the big dam, and part will continue its way and come into the Thomson river below the dam.

It was cold at Rocky Knob, so we decided not to have our lunch on the Mount Gwinear road but at North Cascade, where it is more sheltered. For most of us, lunch disappeared very quickly and the excursion continued to Marshall's Spur. On the way we crossed Swift Creek, Little Boys Creek and Bell's Creek on our way to Swingle Creek.

At Marshall's Spur we turned right into a newly constructed road to the tunnel entrance, called Swingle Portal. This new road almost looked like a highway after the narrower roads we had been on before. It brought us first to an enormous rock crushing plant. Later it was explained to us that the rock here at the top was used for crushing, instead of using the rock coming out of the tunnel as the rock on the top is better for crushing. Enormous mountains of crushed rock were ready to be used. The road continued down and down and down. We reached the tunnel site, a most industrialised valley and where ~~now~~ <sup>now about 90 ft above the crest of</sup> the Thomson dam. Here bulldozers are working, there cranes are lifting long bundles of pipes, and there were railway tracks everywhere with small but very strongly built locomotives going around. The roar of engines was heavy and it was a good thing that our leader could speak in a microphone to make his voice heard.

From here we could see the entrance of the big tunnel under construction. It was 12½ ft in diameter. The wall of the tunnel is constructed of steel which will be lined with concrete later on. A big pipe in the top of the tunnel brings out dust and bad air, while many pipes and leads go in for water, compressed air, and electricity. On the side there was a line of lights as far as we could see. The floor of the tunnel, where the rails of the lorries are, slopes down 1 in 4. The drilling itself is done by machines, drilling 8 ft deep holes...Explosives are placed in the holes and detonated. The loosened rock is then placed in lorries which are hauled up by steel cables, then connected to the loco's outside. The rock is then dumped well away from the entrance to the tunnel.

The work here is stage 2 development of the Yarra tunnel which is 15,000 ft long. Stage 2 will be 18,000 ft, so when completed in 1977, the total length of the tunnel will be 33,000 ft.

The river outside the tunnel is the Thomson after its junction with the Jordan. Now it flows unobstructed through the country we know so well. A small diversion dam forming a reservoir will be built at Swingle Portal. Part of the water will flow through the completed tunnel in 1977. The site of this dam was visible; on one side was an excavation down to the rock and on the other the mountain wall was cleared of bush and soil to the exposed rock.

It was well after three o'clock when our president Tom Moretti spoke to the leaders of the excursion and thanked them for this most interesting and informative day.

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EXCURSION TO SEE THE THOMSON RIVER PROJECT..... contd..

After an afternoon "cuppa" everyone found his or her own way home, I hope....  
( we took a wrong turn and that cost us several miles )

Standing there in front of this enormous work I noticed on my right a most beautiful little waterfall, coming from the bush higher up. Its sides were lined with ferns while the water splashed over moss covered rocks. Big projects like these of course take their toll but I am sure that here no more is destroyed than is absolutely necessary.

When projects like these are planned or widening of roads is announced, our voices about protection and conservation should be heard and surely this has great influence on the final decisions made.

We like good roads for our cars, and we like clear water from our taps, but we hope for co-operation and understanding in the conservation of the environment as well. I am sure after the lecture we heard and the works we saw that our voices were heard and the authorities are trying to co-operate as much as they possibly can.

Bart Sterkenburg.

METEOROLOGYAddress by Mr Wilcock 27/6/75

Mr Wilcock is Officer -In Charge at the local office of the Bureau of Meteorology at the RAAF Base, Sale. The Weather Bureau has existed since 1908 and operates under the Meteorology Act. Its functions are the taking and recording of observations, issuing for casts and warnings, and publication of booklets. This is all done in the public interest, especially for the Defence Services. There are 1962 full-time staff at a ratio of 3-1 professional and technical staff to administrative staff - a very good ratio. 14,000 part-time observers and 7,800 voluntary rainfall observers complete the work force. The Bureau trains its own staff and provides meteorological data to every airplane and ship within its area from Cocos Islands to Norfolk Island and from New Guinea to the Antarctic Station.

In the year 1973/74 740,000 individual forecasts were prepared for aviation, 171,150 forecasts of weather for the public, 78,200 forecasts for shipping and 35,220 fire weather forecasts. 6,776 warnings and alerts for cyclones, fire, flood, roadweather, cold snaps and thunderstorms were issued. 8½ million recorded telephone forecasts provided the P.M.G. with a profitable sideline.

Mr Wilcock defined Meteorology as the application or applied use of the study of the earth's atmosphere. Atmosphere includes the air through which we move. It was stated that man's very existence depends on the 6" layer of topsoil and the fact that it rains. The composition of the atmosphere, the conditions of the troposphere, stratosphere, mesosphere and thermosphere was explained. The percentage of Nitrogen (78.09%) and Oxygen (20.95%) are fixed proportions wherever you go on the earth's surface. The variable proportions are Carbon Dioxide and the Ozone layer which protects us from the ultraviolet rays from the sun.

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METEOROLOGY

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Snow is water vapour that has solidified without being liquid, while hail is formed by water particles colliding and solidifying. Air is not still and the turbulence supports the ice and water particles. The largest recorded hailstone is 5" in diameter (12.7 cm) and weighed  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lbs (0.7 kg) in weight, but a 3.2 Kg. conglomerate mass of hailstone is recorded. A 2.5 cm hailstone falls at 88 km/h while a 10.2 cm one falls at 225 kmh.

In the discussion period some of the facts to emerge were :- energy from the sun penetrates the air without warming it and only warms the land which in turn warms the surrounding air. The rate of fall of temperature is 3 deg.C. for each 304.8. metres rise above the earth's surface. Formation of the inversion layer was discussed. Weather maps with isobars and fronts were explained. The weather map is really about occurrences in the air. The lines on the chart just represent these. Mr Wilcock answered many questions.

Bon Thompson.

EXCURSION TO SALE AREA

28/6/75

The June excursion took us to Sale, meeting at Lake Guthridge at 10.00 am on a fine mild day. Those arriving early spent their time observing the water birds on the lake. It was generally agreed that the bird population is larger than in previous years. It appears that the lake is returning to an Ecological Balance after the draining and deepening and Carp eradication program of 1970. However Reeds and scrub removed by mowing the island recently have deprived the birds of much of the safe refuge and nesting areas available last year.

Mrs Gwen Webb and Mr John Leslie spoke of the work done by the Sale F.N.C and the Historical Society and the frustrations experienced by these groups in their attempts to preserve the natural beauty of the Lake Area and River frontages. A Committee of Management has been formed with other bodies to discuss a proposed lake extension towards Flooding Creek and a Tourist Station/Environmental Studies Area at the site of the present Police Station and barracks.

At this point a number of Bees showed more than a passing interest in our group. Possibly attracted by the ladies perfume. During our shore motor trip around the lake we saw many Coots and Dusky Moor Hens. One group of young moor hens feeding on the lawns near the north shore was estimated at 250. We continued past the flooded Sale Common where several White Egrets and Spoonbills were feeding in the shallows near Cox's Bridge. Along this ford many River Red Gums and Melaleucas have recently been removed under the guise of River Improvement! Power Boats exceeding the 9 kmh limit have undercut the river banks near the caravan park up to 2.4 metres. This has exposed and undermined many tree roots. Thus army of these large Gums which withstood the gentle bow waves of the big paddle steamers nudging their way up the Thomson at 4 knots are now succumbing to the violent wave action of these smaller but more powerful speed boats travelling at speeds up to 64 km/h. Of particular concern to everyone must be the loss of a Canoe Tree of 1.2 metres in diameter and 100 years or more old. And so another link from the past is lost.

contd ....

EXCURSION TO SALE AREA

contd..

Before returning to the lakeside for lunch Mrs Webb opened the Art Gallery to enable us to see a collection of Australian Landscapes painted in colour and black and white by Arthur Markham.

After lunch, Mr Wilcock, Meteorologist from the East Sale Bureau met us and inspected our motley collection of Barometers, Thermometers and Hygrometers.

Under his direction we set up an outdoor weather station, taking observations and recording them. Cloud formations and types were discussed. These changed rapidly as a cold front approached from the West and the temperature dropped. By the time the rain came we were on our way home and the cloud cover eight eighths 8/8.

Ken McDonald.

Our bird member, Joy Johnstone has moved from Tyers to Lakes Entrance where her address is..... Sea Vista Flats  
P.O.Box 108, Lakes Entrance 3909.

We shall miss her, but we wish her health, happiness and good birding at Lakes Entrance. She remains a member of L.V.F.N.C. and will keep in touch with us through the L.V. NATURALIST. She writes....

I'm settling in quite well. Everything is up to expectation and I am finding new treasures in the garden every day - a Plectranthus sp. but it is different to the P.saccata and P.salvifolia var naevillani I have growing. It's more like the salvifolia sp. Then there are two Hakea suaveolens, at least 12 Correa reflexa, several sp of Melaleuca, a trailing type of Grevillea with leaves something like G.elicifolia ( this may be a hybrid).

The grounds are mostly lawn with specimen shrubs and it will be necessary to keep most this way I think. There is a jungle of Coast Wattle and tea tree in the Presbyterian Camp grounds just in front of our residence and I have heard Whipbirds there. There should be Ground-thrushes too and I think I heard Olive Whistlers as well as Golden Whistlers. The first bird I saw here was a Kestrel hovering overhead; the next a butcherbird on the balcony right at the front door. It was after a Wattle goat moth in a crevice of the balcony. Eight Rainbow Lorikeets flew over one day, 27 Pelicans another day. Swans can be seen on the lake down near the golf links ( there are more Swans at Lakes Ent. than I have ever seen here). Jacky Winters, Scarlet Robins, Yellow Tailed Thornbills, Red Wattlebirds, Grey Thrush and Kookaburras are in the grounds here often. I saw Blue Wrens going along the boundary a couple of times. One seemed very gingery-colored so they are just maybe Emu-wrens?

The weather has been beautiful until today, but it may clear later; it's only 8.45 am yet.

There must have been shoals of salmon? out in the ocean in front here, as Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday the trawlers ( we counted 34) were out there all day. It's a pretty sight to see them going out one after the other in the mornings.

Joy Johnstone.



REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD JUNE 24th 1975.

L.V. SEMINAR "OUR VALLEY OUR FUTURE" held in Morwell June 21st.  
14 members attended for the day. The Hon. A.J. Hunt, Minister for Planning introduced the Statement of Planning Policy No 9. This is a vital policy affecting the Latrobe Valley.

Working bee at Arboretum has been called off- indefinitely.

Supper Roster. Miss Galbraith and Miss Christensen offered to be on Supper duty with a new person as it was felt that offers may not be forthcoming as people may not know what the duties are, ie. Miss Galbraith and someone?

Miss Christensen and someone?

Morwell Shire Council has forwarded our letter regarding the use of R.E.D. money to the National Parks Authority for comment.

We suggested some improvements to the Morwell National Park.

Display in Moe Library. Mr Sterkenburg has been working on this, a subcommittee was elected to help him but things are very well under control.

New screen for school is progressing thanks to Mr Lubcke

The Committee would like anyone who has a bird list for the Morwell River Swamp to contact Secretary. A list should be started as the river will be diverted in the future and the swamp will not always be there.

Woodchip Inquiry A submission on behalf of the club has been sent.

Much correspondence regarding conservation matters, tabled at general meeting.

Supper Roster July 25th Mrs Padfield.

Next Committee Meeting will be held on Tuesday July 22nd at the home of Mr and Mrs Lubcke 122a Helen St. Morwell at 7.30pm.

Mr and Mrs McElroy had been involved in a car accident. Neither badly hurt but the car damaged badly. Hope you both have recovered. Best wishes from Members.

From the Editor, her car has been retrieved in good order.

BIRD WATCHING NEAR THE MURRAY.

It was a perfect day and we left at 8.00am with the idea of birdwatching for an hour or two on the way. We went through Chiltern Forest, Corowa and Wagonyah, Cooreen and Daysdale which is 60km from Beechworth. Near Cooreen we stopped to look at water birds on a big lagoon and saw hundreds.

There were Great White Egrets, 12 Plumed Egrets with plumes, about a dozen Yellow-billed Spoonbills and Swans; three sorts of ducks, several sorts of Cormorants, coots and Eastern Swamp-hens, White and Straw-necked Ibis, White-faced Herons, Swallows and a Nankeen Night-heron.

At another watery place we saw three White-necked Herons and 29 Manded Geese and Rainbow Birds, Dusky Wood-swallows and Apostle-birds like little White-winged Choughs without the white.

We listed over 50 birds. The trees are magnificent nearly all the way.

They included a lot of Grey Box which is unfamiliar to me.

May Galbraith.

(From a letter Feb 1975.)

## Latrobe Valley Naturalist

Details of contributing clubs are as follows:

### Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

#### Honorary Secretary:

Mrs I. Peterson  
14 Barry Street,  
Morwell 3840 Tel 342129

General Meetings commence at 7.30pm on the 4th Friday each month  
at the Yallourn State School, YALLOURN.

### Sale F.N.C.

#### Honorary Secretary:

Mrs K. Newenham,  
P.O. Box 302  
Sale 3850 Tel. 441046

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month  
at the C.W.A. Rooms, Macarthur Street SALE.

### Traralgon F.N.C.

#### Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Wall  
156 Kay Street,  
Traralgon 3844. Tel 741948

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month at the  
City Council Reception Rooms. TRARALGON

### Warragul F.N.C.

#### Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Brooks  
3 Nobel Street,  
Warragul, 3820 Tel 21563

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 3rd Friday each month  
at the Albert Street State School, WARRAGUL.

Subscriptions payable to the Honorary Treasurer:

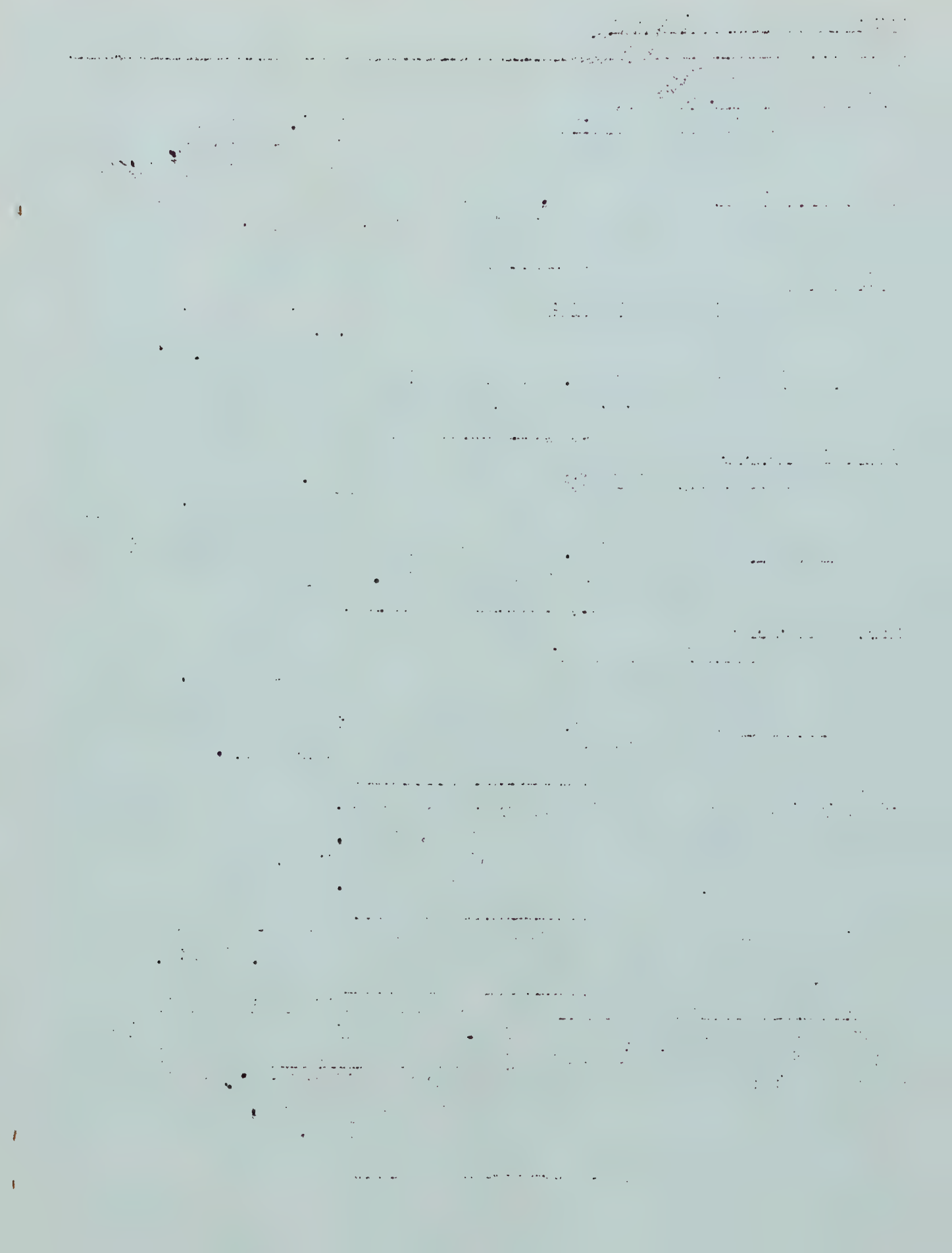
Mrs E. Lubcke,  
122a Helen Street,  
Morwell 3840.

If transport is needed on excursions please contact Mrs Crane  
Tel. 622215.

The LATROBE VALLEY NATURALIST IS THE official publication of the  
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99 Chamberlain Road,  
Newborough 3828.





AUGUST, 1975

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COMING EVENTS.

TRARALGON F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday 12th September  
Mr N.Vincent " Birds "

Excursion:

Gelliondale district. Contact Secretary  
for details.

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WARRAGUL F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday 15th August  
Mr K.Wilson "Woorabinda School Camp "

Excursion:

Sunday 17th August  
Contact Secretary for details.

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LATROBE VALLEY F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday August 22nd Mr and Mrs Thompson  
Workshop night using plant keys (Heaths)

Excursion:

Whitelaws Track Saturday August 23rd.

Meeting Place:

Traralgon High School at 10.00 am

Weekend outing to Philip Island October 18th, 19th. Mr Strong to be the  
leader. Further details in later L.V.Naturalist.

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THOMSON RIVER DAM DEVELOPMENT

Address by M.M.B.W. Officers 23/5/75

Mr Howard and Mr Curry from the MMBW discussed the Thomson River Dam Project. Mr Howard displayed a map showing all the reservoirs at present and gave a background in chronological order of the history of Melbourne's water resources leading up to the decision to build the Thomson development.

In 1967 a Parliamentary Enquiry into Melbourne's future water resources. The Lower Yarra system was agreed to and then the Thomson development.

In 1972 an environmental study of the Upper Yarra was carried out and Parliament agreed to the development of the 2nd. stage of the Thomson project.

In 1973 the result of the environmental study revised the Lower Yarra scheme withdrawing the plan for a dam in the river and installing a pumping station and ancillary equipment.

In August 1974 the 1st. stage of the Thomson River scheme became operational and the second stage of the Thomson river scheme to be in operation in 1977.

The MMBW and Parliament decided Melbourne needed a large storage system to overcome the effects of a drought. The Thomson Dam will hold 250 thousand million gallons.

Mr Howard then discussed the problems in the planning and supply of water for a big city:- Population trends in excess of 10 years needed to be assessed as the Thomson Dam will take 10-12 years to complete.

Climatic patterns must be considered.

Variations in consumption must be allowed for.

A system must be designed that is capable of carrying out all the necessary requirements. Mr Howard had many charts illustrating these problems over a large number of years and estimating the pattern up to the year 2000.

The next section of the evening detailed the Thomson River Dam development. In July 1974 an environmental study was undertaken by the board, including their engineers, foresters, chemists, bacteriologists and others, experts from other Government departments and the general public. The study objectives and the scope of the study were all clearly set out. The study report will be of the size and detail of the Upper Yarra environmental study. It will be divided into 1. background and existing environment, 2. implications of works on general environment and 3. the summary.

Maps were displayed showing details of the three stages of the project.

Stage 1. - 12½ miles of 12½ ft diameter pipeline supplied with water from a catchment of 40,000 acres including Whitelaw's Creek.

Stage 2. west - 3 miles of 12½ ft. pipeline from Fehrings Creek towards the Upper Yarra system.

east - 3½ miles of pipeline to Swingler to include the Jordan River - another 40,000 acres of water catchment.

Stage 3. - Tunnel beside the Thomson river, the large reservoir, diversion work in the Aberfeldy River and a tunnel to join this to the Thomson Dam.

Expected costs of the project are:-

Stage 1. \$30million paid by the MMBW

Stage 2. \$36 million " " " "

contd..pp2



THOMSON RIVER DAM DEVELOPMENT

contd..

Expected costs

Stage 3. Dam and surrounds	\$70 million
Tunnel and inlet tower	\$26 million
Multilevel Outlet tower	\$12 million
Access works	\$16 million

Total \$124 million paid jointly by various state departments.

Mr Curry then discussed the environmental study with which he has been closely involved. The study was divided into three sections:- biological, land use and community needs. Information was obtained by contact with the public, from knowledge previously collected by other government departments and from a good look at the area. One hundred and twenty seven submissions were received by the board the most ever received for any project. In correlating the information received most submissions represented multipurpose use principal, others detailed the ramifications and limitations. So that the ideal of a closed water catchment was totally unacceptable to the public. In the Melbourne Study Area recommendations were made by the Land Conservation Council for the area under discussion.

The land tenure of the 70,700 hectares did not provide any great problems as most of the area is Crown Land.

Finally the land cover study included abundance records of species, plant associations at different altitudes, and special features to be destroyed by the dam. Special ecological species in the area included Ash Mallee near Mt. Useful, Euc. nitens on the Baw Baws, old Myrtlebeech trees in South Cascade and the North and South Cascade Creeks for their unique beauty. There are no rare or localised species in the dam area.

Mr Curry dealt with the different forest associations :- Ash Species associated regrowth after 1939 fires and mature stands on southern slopes of the Great Divide from the fires of 1851. Mixed Species forest divided into tall (above 20 metres) lower (below 20m) and the understorey in detail.

Tall Dry Mixed Species and Riparian vegetation. (Much of the river upstream from the dam wall is so dry as the river has cut down into hard sandstone and so has no river flats. Further upstream there are fringe river flats.) Mr Curry has lists of the dominant species and associations in each group and explained their connection with altitude and position- exposed or protected. The special species in the faunal habitat were the Baw Baw frogs and the Broad-toothed Rat.

The canopy-based wildlife, the litter layer habitat and the stream and stream-side habitat are all included in the study. Other topics covered were:-

Implications. Inundation effects over 2023 hectares will destroy the riparian vegetation and the poorer mixed species. A better refuge will result for water birds. The decision whether or not to clear the dam area will involve the cost of clearing, the royalty on the timber (which will not be very great), the improved quality of the water and the algal effect on the water if the trees remain. The slopes below top water level mark that will be exposed 75% of the time will probably be cleared. Above top water level it is hoped to have 200 metres of forest all around the dam. Because of the unstable water level there will be no development of the riparian vegetation.

Ancillary Works Roads:- construction will be with a sympathetic approach to the environment.

contd...pp3

THOMSON RIVER DAM DEVELOPMENT

co ntd..

Ancillary works. Buildings:- All site offices for construction, etc. will be kept to future inundated areas.

Disturbance :- Keep to a minimum any disturbance to riparian areas to enable riparian growth and waterlife to be maintained and not cause too much siltation.

Effects on Downstream Areas. The winter flow will be reduced and the summer flow will be increased. But a further study will need to be carried out downstream to study the change caused by regular yearly flow.

Implications for Management. Timber:- Production will not be very great.

In Jordan catchment logging will be prohibited in the wet season.

Water Catchment:- Water catchment area will need to be protected at all time.

Fire Suppression :- This is of utmost importance because of possible erosion of the steep gullies.

Grazing and Agriculture:- It is suggested that no more range licences be issued for stages 1 and 2. Any grazing would be confined to areas that can be fenced and that are away from water.

Mr Curry touched lightly on irrigation below Cowwarr weir and the effects of the project on recreation in the area.

The evening concluded with many questions being asked and answered.

Bon Thompson.

SEARCH FOR NEW BIRDS.

After a couple of trips into East Gippsland without much success, we set forth (25 March - 14 April 1975) with our hopes high and a list of birds to see including Ground Parrot, Southern Emu Wren and Eastern Bristle Bird. I reduced my list by 8 during the three weeks.

Stopping at Nova Nova to see the Yellow Tufted Honeyeaters Joy spotted Emu Wrens. The tufties were forgotten and the chase for the wrens began. In amongst the bracken fern I received a bite on the elbow (from what I don't know) and I missed the wren again. That delay meant another 1/2 hour before I could see them.

At Mallacoota the car was stopped to get a better look at some small birds which turned out to be Striated Field Wrens. While we were looking at them a parrot rose from the ground and flew above the heath and landed, so Field Wrens were left and the Ground Parrots pursued. We could raise these pretty light green parrots after nearly walking on them when they fly 40 metres or so away, but could never see them on the ground. While doing this a party of Emu Wrens were in taller bushes and we looked at these as they were easier than the Nova Nova ones. So in a small area we had 3 new birds all at once not knowing which to concentrate on - most confusing, but we arrived back at camp very satisfied with the day.

The other "new birds" seen about Mallacoota were Little Grass Birds which won't keep still more than 1/2 second before disappearing in the grass.

contd... pp4.



SEARCH FOR NEW BIRDS contd..

Glossy Black Cockatoos, seen over the N.S.W. border and at Genoa Peak eating Casuarina seeds. The red in the tail is very pretty. The Australian Gannets were gliding and folding their wings to dive close enough to shore for identifying. On another occasion quite a lot of time was spent in really seeing Little Lorikeets. As the name suggests they are little 15 cm, quick and never still, about the size and colour of a gum leaf, with a red face. It was the red we had to see to know what they were.

Not yet having seen the Bristle Birds here, we were told by "Birdos" we met and who had been to Bemm River, that they were down there near the rubbish tip. As we had intended going there we set off with their calls on tape. Like some of the others, Bristle Birds didn't co-operate very well. They never called like the calls on the tape, but on a couple of occasions stood on a fallen log and scolded before vanishing into the bracken fern. On the first time we heard this "scold" it came from behind. I said "Whats that" Joy still said "A Yellow Robin" then looked and changed to "Thats him".

We did see other birds, some not seen very often and some like the Bush Cuckoo, Beautiful Fire-tail Finch and Hoary Headed Grebes (it was only the second sighting). There are also two others, Little Cuckoo ghrike and Chestnut tailed Heath Wren that we were not sure of and I shall have to get a "better look at" next time.

The weather was dull, some rain and wind but warm most of the time. I think we only had 3 full sunny days for the trip but it didn't ground us.

We saw 125 species altogether.

Heather Christensen.

EXCURSION TO THE LOY YANG AREA.26/7/75

Saturday 26th July was already pleasantly warm and sunny as four twelve cars assembled on the Callignee South Road at the Traralgon South Wildflower Sanctuary. This area will be completely covered by overburden after the Loy Yang open cut project commences.

The first stop was on an elevated section of Barton's Lane from where we were shown the area to be occupied by the open cut, and with the aid of maps, the diversions that will be necessary for the Traralgon Creek Road, Mattingley Hill Road and Barton's Lane. Continuing to the eastern end of Barton's Lane we turned south into Minniedale Road and stopped near the site to be occupied by Loy Yang Power Station. In a short time the Manna Gums and Apple-box trees where we stood will be replaced by cooling towers and 240 m. chimney stacks.

We proceeded south to the 80 acre (32 hectare) Crown Reserve block where members enjoyed the warm sunshine while preparing and demolishing a barbeque lunch.

Lunch completed Mr and Mrs Thompson led a walk through the reserve, which is also to be covered with overburden. Members agree that topsoil from this 32 hectare block should be transferred by the S.E.C. to another area before its vegetation is lost under the overburden.

contd pp5

EXCURSION TO THE LOY YANG AREA.

contd....

Although too early for a full spring showing a good variety of wildflowers were seen in bloom in the reserve. These included pink beard heath (Leucopogon ericoides), common heath (Epacris impressa), Acrotriche serrulata with "honey-pots" fully inflated, Correa reflexa, Bossiaea cinerea, Acacia diffusa, Banksia marginata and several orchids including nodding and tall greenhoods.

The "Birdos" were able to accumulate a satisfying list despite the loss than qui et progress of our party of 25 members through the forest undergrowth.

After returning to the cars we drove on to again meet the Callignee South Road which we followed for a distance to the old Chester Park honest ead site. From here we looked back to the area to be occupied by the Loy Yang Ash Pond and the Fire Service Reservoir.

Detouring back to the Traralgon Creek Road we stopped at a gravel pit in the 1000 acre (400 ha) Crown Reserve.

Thanks to Mr and Mrs Thompson, and the unseasonable warm weather we had a most enjoyable day and after an afternoon cup of tea we set off for home.

Dick Reid.

THOUGHTS FROM A TENT ON TAMBORITHA.

I gazed across a rain-misted valley from our tent among the Snow Gums near Tamboritha Hut. The rain had enriched the many-hued patterns on the bark of these lovely trees - enduring trees, that have been twisted and buffeted by the wind and weather into many strange and beautiful shapes, each one seeming to me to possess a character all its own. A gnarled old warrior, a graceful ballerina, a comic Charlie Chaplin - I could find them all there among the Snow Gums.

A Flame Robin perched on the dripping branch of one near the tent, while another flew up, pecked into a knot-hole in the trunk and continued on his way. They reminded me of the poem -

" A tree that may in summer wear  
A nest of robins in her hair.  
Upon whose bosom snow has lain;  
Who intimately lives with rain . . . "

As I left the tent, to go and take my place among the throng around the big fire down at the hut, drying out gunboots, rainhats, raincoats etc., I thought -

" Snow Gums, I shall come and visit you again another day.  
When you are living a little less intimately with rain ".

June Lubcke.

I think these thoughts may be echoed by many who were in the rain at Tamboritha.

ed.



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REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD JULY 22nd 1975 .

The usual large amount of conservation literature etc received. These are tabled at the general meetings for members to look at.

Photoflora. We had received notice from the Native Plant Preservation Society regarding the showing of slides in 1976. After much deliberation it was decided that we would decline the offer to arrange photoflora in this area. It was felt that rising charges and a general lack of interest from the public (members and their friends made up the bulk of the people last time ).we would have difficulty in getting enough people to make it a financial success.

National Herbarium identification of specimens, to be sent through the plant liaison officer of the F.N.C.V. Specimens will only be identified if the club is affiliated with the F.N.C.V. Decided that our club would join in this scheme. The Secretary has full details of this arrangement.

Alteration to program. Mrs Thompson had agreed to change the Key night to August Excursion will be to the same place as arranged. Meeting place Traralgon High School at 10.00 am.

There was an offer from Mrs Taylor of Brimpaen to camp on her property some time. It was felt that the summer time would be too hot, a more suitable time in the spring time may be arranged. This area is near to the Grampians.

Display in Moe Library. This was arranged by Mr Sterkenburg. We were disappointed with the small area available. In spite of this there was a very interesting display showing our interests in Natural History. This may gain the club some new members. Our thanks to Mr Sterkenburg for his efforts in arranging the display.

Next Committee Meeting will be held at the home of Mrs Padfield 99 Chamberlain road, Newborough on Tuesday August 19th at 7.30 pm.  
Members welcome at these meetings.

Supper Roster August 22nd.

Subscriptions to L.V. Naturalist are due in March of each year, members are allowed 3 months to pay then you are notified of your unfinancial state.

Amounts payable to the Treasurer are L.V.Naturalist only \$2.50

Membership of L.V.F.N.C. Family \$3.50 Single member \$3.00

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Members will be sorry to learn of the death of Mrs Rosaline Lester. She was interested in the clubs activities although ill health did not allow her to be an active member. Our sympathy goes out to her husband Charles and family.

---

Latrobe Valley Naturalist

Details of contributing clubs are as follows:

Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs I. Peterson  
14 Barry Street,  
Morwell 3840 Tel 342129

General Meetings commence at 7.30pm on the 4th Friday each month  
at the Yallourn State School, YALLOURN.

Sale F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs K. Newenham,  
P.O. Box 302  
Sale 3850 Tel. 441046

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month  
at the C.W.A. Rooms, Macarthur Street SALE.

Traralgon F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Wall  
156 Kay Street,  
Traralgon 3844. Tel 741948

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month at the  
City Council Reception Rooms. TRARALGON

Warragul F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Brooks  
3 Nobel Street,  
Warragul, 3820 Tel 21563

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 3rd Friday each month  
at the Albert Street State School, WARRAGUL.

Subscriptions payable to the Honorary Treasurer:

Mrs E. Lubcke,  
122a Helen Street,  
Morwell 3840.

If transport is needed on excursions please contact Mrs Crane  
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SEPTEMBER, 1975

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COMING EVENTS

WARRAGUL F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday September 19th  
The Grampians in Colour, Mr and Mrs A. Hore

Excursion:

Sunday September 21st  
Woorabinda Walk, contact Secretary for details.

---

TRARALGON F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday 3rd October

Excursion:

Mr A. Roberts Fisheries and Wild Life  
River Trip to Dowd's Morass and Lake  
Wellington. Contact Secretary for details.

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LATROBE VALLEY F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday September 26th  
" Birds " Miss H. Aston

Excursion:

Saturday September 27th to Sale area

Meeting Place:

Lake Guthridge at 10.00 am

Excursion to Coolart Sanctuary Sunday September 21st. We are joining Traralgon F.N.C. who have arranged this day.

FORESTS COMMISSION EXCURSION TO THE STRZELECKIS

On Tuesday 9th July our President Mr Moretti, Ollie and I attended, by invitation, a day in the Strzelecki Ranges with the Forests Commission. Mr Granter, Minister for Forests; Dr Moulds, Chairman of the Forests Commission; Mr McInnes, member of parliament; representatives of APM Forests and conservation groups were present.

The object of the day was for Forests Commission to explain their ambitious concept of reforesting the Strzelecki Ranges. This scheme commenced in 1947 and has progressed slowly. Some of the land was leased to APM Forests on 60 year leases with the condition that it must be forested by them. The Commission is buying private land in the area and hope some day to have all the ranges forested. The areas where Ash forests have deteriorated because of previous clearing for agriculture have been bought and are being planted with Euc. regnans. This will greatly improve the forests in years to come. Areas of grassland are also being planted with Euc. regnans but it is difficult to establish these trees in grassland.

The tour commenced at the Morwell River Prison Farm where so many of the seedlings are grown. Then areas at different stages of development were visited from the logging and replanting stage through the growth stages to some areas planted over 20 years ago. Lunch was provided at the Balook Guest-house. The area near Bulga Park that has caused much discussion, was visited and the work being carried out there explained. Bulga Park was the final stop where there was some discussion and the Minister and other gentlemen thanked for their attendance.

The day was very beneficial to our group as we now understand what is being done in the ranges and hopefully in future will be able, when considering a special block, to look at it as part of the whole area. We may want some areas reserved for special reasons and I feel the scheme is large and hopefully flexible enough to allow for timber production and conservation.

I know we are not enthusiastic about Pine forests, but it has been proved that Eucalypts will grow in soil where pines have previously grown and been harvested. This means areas of pine forests today could be areas of Eucalypts in the future if this is desirable at that time. Also the Forests Commission are going to much trouble to try to establish Euc. regnans on suitable sites.

The Forests Commission are to be complimented on a well organised and informative day.

Bon Thompson.

Unfortunately the excursion scheduled for August 23rd had to be called off. This is the first occasion for several years that one of our outings has not been held, as we generally are not deterred by a little rain!

Our apologies to any people inconvenienced by having their plans laid off at short notice.



" KEYING OUT " WITH THE THOMPSONS.

All members look forward to our once a year "workshop", keying out plants with Mr and Mrs Thompson, and I am sure we all learn something from Bon's careful explanations and Ollie's beautiful photographic illustrations, as well as from the practise we have in "detective work", keying out plants to learn the names of the specimens supplied.

We certainly appreciate all the work that goes into the preparation of specimens as well as the lucid explanations and selection of slides. Certainly that was so this year when specimens of 12 species were numbered, and a list of names corresponding to the numbers supplied so that after our work in following out the keys we could check the accuracy - or otherwise - of our naming. Two duplicated keys were provided. One key was to the genera of heaths to be found in the Latrobe Valley, and the other was a key to the names of the 12 species which were numbered on the specimen table.

Mrs Thompson began by reading the paragraph which introduced the generic key. This described the features characteristic of all members of the heath family, and in reading it she also explained the technical terms used. An abbreviated form of this introduction (with meanings of the terms incorporated) runs thus  
Heaths are woody plants of various habits (exception Baw Baw Berry which is hardly woody). The flowers have 5 sepals (calyx-lobes) and stigma (pistil) are undivided. Flowers are regular (evenly shaped) or nearly so, not in heads (stalkless clusters) and never on leafless stems. Leaves are alternate, small and narrow, stiff, often sharp, minutely stalked or stem-sheathing, parallel veined. The fruit is berry-like, with one stone (a drupe) or else dry and opening by 5 slits (a capsule).

Mrs Thompson then explained the use of the keys provided. The principle on which all keys are constructed is that of a series of choices between alternatives. The first alternatives were :-

- Style terminal; fruit a drupe 3
- Style in a depression; fruit a capsule 2

The numbers indicated farther clues given below, between which choices must be made, and so on through a series of alternatives until one arrived at a name instead of a number. If choices were made correctly (not always easy, however good the key) the name would be that of the genus to which the plant in question was examining belonged.

The key to species (represented by specimens on the table) followed the same principle but used letters instead of figures for the alternatives.

The first choice was between spreading and non spreading plants; the second between leaves stem-sheathing or not stem-sheathing. Few could fail to discover the right name when using this key.

After these explanations we saw a series of beautiful slides of typical heaths not found in the Latrobe Valley, then 11 typical valley species and three found just beyond the valley (Wilson's Promontary). The commentary drew attention to various points characteristic of different species, and also to the meaning of many of the technical names used, because it is much easier to remember a name if one knows its meaning.

"KEYING OUT"

contd...

For example EPACRIS is a combination of epi = upon, and acros = the top, the supposed reason being that the first known heaths grew on hillsides. In LEUCOPOGON leucos = white, pogon = a beard. Anyone who has seen the fluffy white petals of a beard-heath (Leucopogon) can see the appropriateness of that, and one of the slides showed a dramatic example of it. Species names (and generic names also) occasionally honour people, but are more often descriptive, and a fine series of slides of Epacris impressa (Common Heath) showed us the 5 little impressions, or dimples, encircling the base of the bell and giving the specific name impressa.

Other slides showed the parallel veins characteristic of the leaves of nearly all heaths.

Monotoca scoparia is the technical name of the early flowering Broom-heath, a tall shrub with minute white flowers, exquisite when magnified enough for details to be seen. Both names are descriptive :- monos = one, tokos = a birth (one seeded) and scopae = a broom (broomlike habit).

Our beautiful Pink Swamp-heath is one of those with a name less easy to remember because it is named after a person. The generic name Sprengelia refers to Sprengel a German botanist who described many plants almost 200 years ago.

The first slide shown was of the least characteristic of all our heaths, the Baw Baw Berry, known only from a few Victorian mountains. It has fat little cream bells and succulent little greenish and red drupes which are heath-like, but it differs in its relatively broad soft leaves with bluntly toothed margins in its rather succulent branches and its ovary under the flower (inferior) while all other heaths have it inside the flower (superior).

As we saw slide after slide of heaths familiar or rare the characters which separate one species or genus from another were pointed out. Perhaps, before mentioning some of them we should define the terms Family, Genus (plural Genera, adjective Generic) and Species.

A Family is a group of varied plants with at least one important character in common ( for example pods and pea-shaped flowers in Papilionaceae the pea family)

A Genus is a smaller group with the family characters and also some other characteristic shared by all its members ( as triangular pods and bitter-tasting leaves in all bitter-peas but not in peas).

A Species is a member of the genus differing from all the other members in some constant character ( as broad leaves in Hop Bitter-pea)

Returning to the slides we saw our beautiful Pink Swamp Heath with stem-sheathing leaves, and pink flowers with petals joined only at the base ( so it looks more like a star than a bell) and stamens joined to the petals near the base of the flower instead of near the top as in Common Heath; Prickly Broom-heath (often a small tree) with stamens opening to release the pollen.

contd..PP4



"KEYING OUT"

contd..

We saw three species of *Acrotriche* illustrating the meaning of the name ( acron =tip or summit and trichon =hair ) for at the tip of each petal spreading from the tiny inflated bells a little hair-tuft stood erect. This is seen equally in the soft-foliaged Honey-pots, *A.serrulata* with their bells full of honey-flavoured nectar, the Trailing Ground-berry, *A.prostrata*, and the erect stiff-leaved Ridged Ground-berry, *A.affinis* with their bells full of stronger less pleasantly flavoured nectar.

One is tempted to describe all the slides, but no words can do as much justice to them as our memories do. At the end of the talk there was a general movement toward the table of specimens, and, in spite of the reminder "you needn't key out the specimens unless you want to", members were soon clustered round them like bees round a honeypot.

All must have learned something during that evening. Certainly all enjoyed it.

Jean Galbraith.

CONCERNING PROVIDENCE PONDS.

On May 4th of this year members of Bairnsdale F.N.C. joined with Sale members, at their invitation, in an excursion to Providence Ponds. An officer of the Forests Commission from Heyfield, Mr Waayers, met the combined party there to discuss with them a rather interesting but long-term project which will be well worthwhile if the clubs feel that they can go through with it.

Mr Waayers suggested that he mark out a number of plots in the bush for burning experiments, the first to be burned each year, the next every second and so on. The idea being that naturalists check these plots at regular intervals to determine the effect of the periodic burning on the plant species that grow there.

The sandy ridges and swamps of the Ponds area can be a really magnificent flower garden, but somehow, whenever we pass it always seems so burned and battered. This proposal seems a step in the right direction, and members of all five Gippsland clubs could well lend a hand, for most of us pass that way at some time or other. It is encouraging that the Forest Officer should ask members to co-operate in such a scheme. The *Clematis*, Bairnsdale Club's annual Journal, published a list of the principal flora in the 1967 issue.

In autumn the Ponds area does not look very inviting. The sandy ridges appear to support nothing but charred trees and dense bracken, possibly the result of too frequent hot fires. The many depressions are interesting for their sedges and rushes, and we know that the orchid content can be good in season. There are at least five eucalypt species, and half a dozen wattles, besides many flowering plants, chief among them being the Golden Grevillea, Wedding bush and the Starhair. I sincerely hope that this proposal may be the beginning of a better deal for Providence Ponds, and that, under careful management, it might yet become a real beauty spot on the road to Bairnsdale.

Ellen Lyndon.

BLOSSOMS IN EARLY SPRING

Everyone looks eagerly for the first signs of spring whether its the song and habits of the birds, the increasing green in the grass, or the first flowering of garden trees and shrubs. However in the bush there is surely nothing so typical of springtime as the wattles when they burst into bloom and fill forest or rocky ravine or gentle slope with all their golden glory.

In the Wulgulmerang district this season the flowering of the wattles has been quite remarkable, for generally speaking, they have started to bloom four to six weeks earlier than usual. And not only so, but most species have been so heavily laden with blossom as to completely hide the foliage.

As far back in the winter as the end of June, on a hill at the back of this property, there was quite a considerable flowering of Red-stem Wattle (Acacia rubida), which normally commences to flower in early September at this altitude of over 900 metres. Around July 1st, Silver Wattle (A. dealbata) was out in patches down on the Suggan Buggan River, and about that time I noticed the first flowering sprays of Kybean Wattle (A. kybeanensis), Boomerang Wattle (A. amoena), Dagger Wattle (A. siculiformis) and Golden Wattle (A. pycnantha). By the abundance of blossom observed later, it would appear that Red Wattle (A. silvestris) and Snowy River Wattle (A. boormanii) had also commenced to flower by early July. This is a remarkably early date for this mountain climate.

Apparently favourable conditions for plant growth throughout the year caused the buds to develop earlier than usual, and then the record mild conditions of this winter resulted in the early flowering.

On August 3rd we went to McKillops Bridge, on the Snowy River, on purpose to see the wattles at their best, and we were well rewarded. At Wulgulmerang Creek the Red-stem Wattle was most evident, and then further on towards where the short roads turn towards the Little River Gorge lookout, the Kybean Wattle was most spectacular with its bushy form a mass of gold on bare stony ground, and along the roadside gravel.

Descending to lower levels the Golden Wattle, with its slender stems amongst the grey trunks of the White Box (Eucalyptus albens), was gracefully handsome. Then came the Boomerang Wattle along the steep cutting, bearing the greatest show of bloom I have ever noticed on that less attractive species, although its bright green foliage is always distinctive.

But it was lower down that we enjoyed the first sight of the Snowy River Wattle in full bloom in all its beauty. This wattle is often rather a scraggly shrub or small tree, but its lack of symmetry is more than made up for by the delicate arrangement of small flower heads and rather short linear phyllodes that gives it a soft elegance unlike any species I know. This was Norman Wakefield's favourite wattle, and I don't think there could be a better choice.

Our trip ended at the camping place on the Deddick River just beyond the bridge, where we had a cup of tea while enjoying the spectacular sight of several large specimens of Red Wattle trees in full bloom. These bore such a mass of flower that the foliage was almost completely hidden. This is the most brilliant flowered species of wattle in the district.

This article by Keith Rogers will be continued in the October issue of L.V. Naturalist.



REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AUGUST 19th.

We had been advised that a trust fund was being formed to assist in financing the NATURAL HISTORY MEDALLION. It was agreed that we support this cause and a donation has been forwarded from the club.

The usual large amount of correspondence from conservation interests and natural history clubs newsletters and magazines. All these documents are available for members perusal at the general meetings.

The minutes of the Conservation Council of Victoria meeting were received. Meeting September 26th. We have invited other Gippsland clubs to attend. A special supper to be provided by members bringing a plate please. All members to assist with supper duties.

Excursion September 27th will be to the Sale area looking at Birds. Miss Aston will be the leader. We are to meet at Lake Guthridge at 10.00 am

The costs of the Naturalist were discussed at length. We have to consider an increase in 1. postage, 2. printing, 3. paper, stencils ink etc. Members should expect an increase in subscriptions next year. This matter will be discussed again at further committee meetings.

Loy Yang Inquiry. Mrs Thompson (conservation co-ordinator) advised that the Parliamentary Public Works Committee would be meeting again, but we would not present further evidence as we had nothing more to gain by presenting more evidence. The Committee were disappointed with the attitude of the S.E.C. regarding the topsoil.

Miss Galbraith told of an exhibition of Botanical Illustrations being held at the State Library Melbourne during August. Some members were lucky enough to see this interesting display.

Coastal excursion September 21st. We have been invited by Traralgon Club to join them in visiting this area on Westernport Bay.

Several committee members will be attending the Institute of Foresters dinner to be held at Phelans Traralgon September 18th.

Next Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday September 23rd at the home of Mr and Mrs Branson 13 Cross St. Newborough at 7.30 pm. Any member of the club interested may attend these meetings.

WITH GRATITUDE AND SORROW.

We were sorry to learn of the sudden death of our member Fred Strong on Saturday 6th September. Fred had been a member of L.V.F.N.C. for a considerable time and we were most grateful for his offer to print the Naturalist when Mr Sterkenburg gave up his position as printer. Fred has been printer, assembler, and poster of the paper since taking over the position. As we came to know him we became aware of his deep love for nature, his quiet manner in going about his activities we should remember with gratitude, and sorrow at the loss we feel.

The whole club would send its sympathy to his family.

## Latrobe Valley Naturalist

Details of contributing clubs are as follows:

### Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

#### Honorary Secretary:

Mrs I. Peterson  
14 Barry Street,  
Morwell 3840 Tel 342129

General Meetings commence at 7.30pm on the 4th Friday each month  
at the Yallourn State School, YALLOURN.

### Sale F.N.C.

#### Honorary Secretary:

Mrs K. Newenham,  
P.O. Box 302  
Sale 3850 Tel. 441046

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month  
at the C.W.A. Rooms, Macarthur Street SALE.

### Traralgon F.N.C.

#### Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Wall  
156 Kay Street,  
Traralgon 3844. Tel 741948

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month at the  
City Council Reception Rooms. TRARALGON

### Warragul F.N.C.

#### Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Brooks  
3 Nobel Street,  
Warragul, 3820 Tel 21563

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 3rd Friday each month  
at the Albert Street State School, WARRAGUL.

Subscriptions payable to the Honorary Treasurer:

Mrs E. Lubcke,  
122a Helen Street,  
Morwell 3840.

If transport is needed on excursions please contact Mrs Crane  
Tel. 622215.

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Newborough 3828.





OCTOBER, 1975

ISSUE No. 142.



# *Latrobe Valley Naturalist*

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COMING EVENTS

## TRARALGON F.N.C. MEETING

- \* Friday 14th November  
Mr. Bill Davis Film  
"BIRTH OF A SANCTUARY"  
at Gray Street School  
Visual Aid Centre  
TRARALGON
- \* Thursday October 23rd  
Mr. Johnson  
Director, Conservation Council of Victoria  
Gray Street School  
Visual Aid Centre  
TRARALGON
- \* CAMP OUT - Wilson's Promontory  
8th, 9th November

## LATROBE VALLEY F.N.C. MEETING

- \* Friday 24th October  
Mr. G. Errey from Geelong F.N.C.  
Films on TRIP TO THE INLAND  
Main Interest: Botany
- \* EXCURSION - October 25th  
To the Yarram area - Orchids and  
other flowers. Arranged by Mr.  
Sterkenburg.  
  
Meeting Place - Gormondale New Hall  
at 10 a.m.
- \* DON'T FORGET CAMPOUT JANUARY 1976  
Will be organised by Bairnsdale F.N.C.  
Details being finalised.

## WARRAGUL F.N.C.

- \* PROGRAMME MEETING - Tuesday October 28th  
at the home of Mr. & Mrs. McElroy, 35  
Latrobe Road, Morwell.
- \* Meeting - Friday October 17th  
M.A. Ringin "ARNHEM LAND ESCARPMENT"
- \* Excursion - Sunday October 19th  
CONTACT SECRETARY FOR DETAILS

## MOE

- \* Bart Sterkenburg - Exhibition of  
WILDFLOWER PAINTINGS - Moe Library  
(Open Library hours)  
6 - 18 October 1975

NEW REGIONAL ORGANISATION  
IN NATIONAL PARKS*Address by Mr. Ian Smith  
July 25th, 1975*

Mr. Ian Smith is Regional Superintendent for the East Gippsland Region, National Parks Service. East Gippsland Region extends from the source of the Murray across to Mt. Howitt, Tamboritha, down Useful Spur to the Latrobe River to the sea. Each region has a Regional Superintendent, Chief Ranger, a Clerk and a Typist.

The National Parks Service needs new regional organisations because new park areas are being added under determinations by the L.C.C., and many new rangers have had to be appointed. Up to 1969 the National Parks Authority played only a caretaking role as it had neither the staff nor the money to develop and improve the parks. Visitor pressures did not exist then and the Authority got the name for closing up areas to hold land for land's sake and doing nothing with it.

Today the values set down by the Authority are still to preserve the areas, but like other Governmental departments they have to manage the land and tighten control. The Forests Commission is finding it necessary to close certain tracks and declare wilderness areas. The Department of Lands are getting a warden system of their own and tightening up control too. These changes represent a major change in Government and community thinking.

The new National Parks Act has been passed but has not yet been proclaimed. The primary concern of a National Park is the conservation of an area and to keep it as near as possible to its present condition, with traces of man removed wherever possible. Other parks will exist with less stringent control to enable them to be used by the public and the aim will be to retain their many uses. Examples of these parks are :

1. Steiglitz in the Brisbane Ranges with the main aim to preserve historical areas,
2. The dairy farm in the Yarra Valley, greatly used by the public of Melbourne,
3. The open recreational park at Templestowe (Westerfolds)
4. The Peninsula Park where the Government has spent much money buying back land in the Mornington Peninsula to preserve the countryside as it is now and prevent urban development there.
5. Coastal Reserve Park in the Gippsland Lakes area from Seaspray to Lakes Entrance. This area is very large and can provide for many types of useage by the public. It is better managed by zoning than as a National Park.



## 5. continued ...

It is important for (a) day recreation; (b) scientific study of birds, flowers and fauna for conservation; (c) camping and boating; (d) superb hunting areas for ducks, hog deer, etc. This will be the first time that permits for hunting will be issued in relation to an area under National Parks control.

Big things are happening in the way of National Parks. East Gippsland is now under study by the L.C.C. and could provide large National Parks of world standard. At present there are 59 square miles of National Parks, 48 square miles of forest parks and 55 square miles of Wildlife Reserves, totalling 162 square miles, being 1.9% of the whole East Gippsland area. The recommendation at present being submitted is for 486 square miles for conservation.

GUIDELINES FOR THE FUTURE

1. A National Park area is where the environment is preserved and not manipulated. East Gippsland parks should contain a whole range of parks.
2. Access to parks should be by spur roads rather than through roads.
3. Luxury accommodation should be at already developed towns and cities.
4. There will be need to control visitor numbers within the limit of the area to cope.
5. Large areas with no vehicular access at all will provide wilderness areas. Highly developed recreational areas under the control of the ranger, experienced in public relations and campground management, will be the other end of the scale.
6. Strong interpretive and educational areas will also be provided.

Mr. Smith suggests that it could take a generation to change the attitude of the general public to the need for and uses of National Parks.

Bon Thompson

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

(Newspaper advertisement by House of Representative Standing Committee on Environment and Conservation)

"The Committee has resolved to conduct an Inquiry into: "The impact of Off-Road Vehicles upon the Australian environment". While the value of such vehicles for a number of purposes is recognised, it has become apparent that the ready availability and versatility of trail bikes, mini bikes, dune buggies, 4-wheel drives and over-snow vehicles is placing an increasing burden on national parks and other wilderness and semi-wilderness areas. As environmental nuisance and risk to public safety are of growing significance, the Committee is to make an early examination of the problems.

It is expected that the inquiry will canvass the adequacy of present controls and their varying effectiveness, the actual extent of the damage caused by such vehicles, and the need for an nature of any measures which could minimise these deleterious effects.

Written submissions are invited from persons and organisations interested in placing evidence on this reference before the Committee. The Committee may invite those making submissions to give supporting evidence at public hearings.

Those intending to make submissions should write promptly to the Clerk, House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment and Conservation, Parliament House, Canberra, A.C.T. 2600. The closing date for submissions is 24 October 1975.

#### BLOSSOMS IN EARLY SPRING - continued from previous issue ...

On barren, rocky escarpments it will flourish in reduced form, often sprawling over cliff faces, from which it may at the present time be seen as bands of yellow up to several miles distant. However in the coastal belt, such as in the Nowa Nowa area, Red Wattle is often quite a tall forest tree.

Besides the wattles, certain other plants have also started to flower much earlier than usual in this locality, although with some plants this is not the case. Around the homestead here the little low growing common Hovea (*H. heterophylla*) was in full bloom very early, while the Grey Beard Heath (*Leucopogon attenuatus*) is so far scarcely noticeable. Usually this little plant is the only one to flower as early as July on this tableland, and is most attractive with its masses of sweet scented, woolly white flowers along the low and often trailing branches.

Another plant that is early this year and flowering particularly well, is the Purple Coral Pea (*Hardenbergia violacea*). There was also a very early and abundant flowering in the Suggan Buggan and Snowy River valleys of the small-leaved Clematis (*c. microphylla*). This creeper is so characteristic of the open box forest of those areas, and the dense masses of pale greenish-cream flowers completely covering many a bush are most attractive. So, too, will be the silvery white plumes that will replace each flower later in the fruiting stage.

Seasonal variations in the flora are always interesting, and this spring gives promise of nature being in her most lavish mood.



## OUR HOLIDAY AT PAMBULA BEACH - ALIAS JIGUMA ... ..

We arrived at Merimbula on 11th March 1975 with our windscreen wipers working overtime, and flood warnings on the radio every half hour telling us that the highway was cut both to the north and to the south. Luckily, the following day found us in possession of a comfortable flat, perched high on the hillside at Jiguma with a splendid view of the lovely crescent-curved bay extending from Pambula Beach to Merimbula, and also in the other direction, the bay and inlet to the Pambula River.

As we ate our lunch, gloating over the views below us, a White-breasted Sea-Eagle glided past our window. Then a Satin Bowerbird perched on our clothes line ... that flat proved to be a bird lovers delight! The weather also immediately mended its manners and the receding flood waters were an absolute blessing, for inland water birds were everywhere about the districts where we mostly ranged - Pambula, Merimbula and Bega.

We made an excursion to the Widgeram Native-plant Nursery north of Merimbula. Purple Fan-flowers were blooming in several places along the roadside, and birds were plentiful around the nursery. I counted twenty-two species during the brief time we spent there. We lunched beside the road on our way back then wandered down a track where Little Wattlebirds and Yellow-winged Honeyeaters were in abundance, to a rugged section of the coastline.

We came back along this road another day and branched off on a track to Tura Heads. I noticed more wild-flowers blooming there than anywhere else, although few birds were to be seen. Among old friends such as Common Corea, Purple-flags, Trigger-plants and Purple Eyebright were Flannel-flowers and Sticky Boronia.

Another day's journey was to the charming little town of Candelo. I was able to identify a pair of Whistling Kites near here, which was quite an achievement for me as my bird lists contain many a frustrated entry - "Hawk"?? Thanks to Peter Slater's excellent book "A Field Guide to Australian Birds", these could be distinguished by their lazy flight, bowed wings, untidy (shaggy?) appearance and unfeathered legs.

Hardly a day went by when we failed to hear "the notes of the Bellbirds come running and ringing". This poetic version held good for about a week, then I began to wish to little perishers to the very devil, for their clangour prevented me from picking up other possibly more interesting calls. Bellbird colonies were plentiful.

We explored the track into the old gold diggings near Greigs Flat, and it was along this track that we sighted the Glossy Cockatoo - also known as the Casuarina Cockatoo.

One male and two female birds were feeding on the fruiting cones of a Black She-oak (*Casuarina littoralis*). They ignored us completely and peppered us with remnants of the cones as we walked beneath the tree, at times uttering their soft calls which to me sounded like a squeaky door hinge. We finally startled them into flying away out of sight, but on our return about an hour later they were back again busily feeding on the same *Casuarina* tree, although hundreds of the same species were growing in that area.

When we arrived at the old diggings where the track follows a creek along a deep gully, several lyrebirds were calling. One decided to explore his repertoire of bird calls, and coming through repeatedly was a perfect imitation of a bellbird - including both "chime" and "scolding" calls. Naturally I haven't heard our local (Latrobe Valley) lyrebirds come up with this one! A pair of Painted Quail were poking about on the track as we walked back through the drier, more open forest area.

We lunched one day beside the lake at Merimbula, and among the usual small group of Seagulls awaiting handouts was a solitary, one-legged Bar-tailed Godwit busily plunging his long, slightly upturned bill into the wet sand. Six days later we drove past the same spot - and there was our "long-ranging, one-legged, long-billed bar-tailed God-wit", still going about his business!

Several evenings as we strolled along the shore we enjoyed the spectacular plunge-diving of Australian Gannets, and on one occasion found a Hoary-headed Grebe which seemed to be stranded on the shore. We examined his olive-green, lobed and partially webbed feet - much to his indignation. Grebes are hardly able to walk on land and he headed for the water with a comical "tippy-toe, flop" action. Once there, he dived expertly under each on-coming breaker, but it was a losing battle as he kept being washed back to the shore. I hope he found his way to more placid waters. Grebes usually fly at night.

We decided to drive home through the Maffra district where Eric ranges during his working days. He was able to show me a flotilla of about 150 Pelicans sailing on a lagoon near the farm where I had lived as a child. Also, as well as White Ibis and many other species of birds, there were scores of Straw-necked Ibis around the paddocks of Riverslea and Tinamba. We had seen plenty of White Ibis round Pambula, but not one Straw-necked.

In the town of Maffra I realised also that we had not previously during our holiday noticed one Indian Myna!

These few additions brought our bird-list up to 104 species for the holiday, so a couple of very amateur Birdos arrived home to Morwell having just managed to "make a century".

June Lubcke.



REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 23rd 1975\* NATURAL HISTORY MEDALLION

We were advised that the 1975 Medallion had been awarded to Miss Alison Ashby of South Australia. Miss Ashby is a noted painter of Australian wildflowers, and our congratulations go to her.

\* COOLART EXCURSION

Members reported that a very enjoyable day was had in joining with Traralgon Club for the Coolart Excursion.

\* Traralgon Club are holding a special meeting at which Mr. Bill Davis will show his film "The Birth of a Sanctuary". November 14th is the date and the night will be advertised in the local papers.

\* The usual large amount of correspondence was received and this is available at the general meetings for members to look at.

\* A special meeting will be held Tuesday October 28th to discuss the programme for 1976. If you have any thoughts about meetings, speakers, excursions, please contact the Secretary as soon as possible. We do like to have some ideas from the members. The meeting will be held at the home of Mr. & Mrs. McElroy, 35 Latrobe Road Morwell, 7.30 pm.

\* THE NATURALIST

Mr. Ringin has offered to print the Naturalist commencing from the November issue. His generous offer was accepted, thus helping us out of a difficult situation. The Editor would like to co-opt members to assist with assembling, wrapping, etc.

\* There was discussion about the merits of the club obtaining its own typewriter. At present we are using a machine not really suitable for the work it is doing. The Committee will investigate some machines and their costs, etc.

\* Arrangements finalised for September and October excursions.

\* CAMP OUT 1976 AUSTRALIA DAY WEEKEND

This will be joining with Bairnsdale F.N.C. at Mt. Ellery. More details when available.

\* Members can expect a rise in the cost of The Naturalist for 1976. Our postage rates will double from 1st February 1976. Also there are other increases to consider - printing, paper, stencils, etc.

\* There was some concern felt about the proposed programme of burning at Providence Ponds.

\* The Club had received a copy of the Loy Yang project and Fauna Survey conducted by the S.E.C.

\* The next Committee Meeting will be held on Tuesday 21st October at the home of Mrs. Peterson, 14 Barry Street, Morwell at 7.30 p.m.

\* Supper Roster, October 24th. Mrs. Padfield and helper?

\* 

CONGRATULATIONS to Leongatha members GRAEME AND MARGARET ROWE on the birth of their son. We look forward to meeting him at meetings and excursions.

## Latrobe Valley Naturalist

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### Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs I. Peterson  
14 Barry Street,  
Morwell 3840 Tel 342129

General Meetings commence at 7.30pm on the 4th Friday each month  
at the Yallourn State School, YALLOURN.

### Sale F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mrs K. Newenham,  
P.O. Box 302  
Sale 3850 Tel. 441046

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month  
at the C.W.A. Rooms, Macarthur Street SALE.

### Traralgon F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Wall  
156 Kay Street,  
Traralgon 3844. Tel 741948

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 1st Friday each month at the  
City Council Reception Rooms. TRARALGON

### Warragul F.N.C.

Honorary Secretary:

Mr J. Brooks  
5 Nobel Street,  
Warragul, 3820 Tel 21563

Meetings commence at 8.00pm on the 3rd Friday each month  
at the Albert Street State School, WARRAGUL.

Subscriptions payable to the Honorary Treasurer:

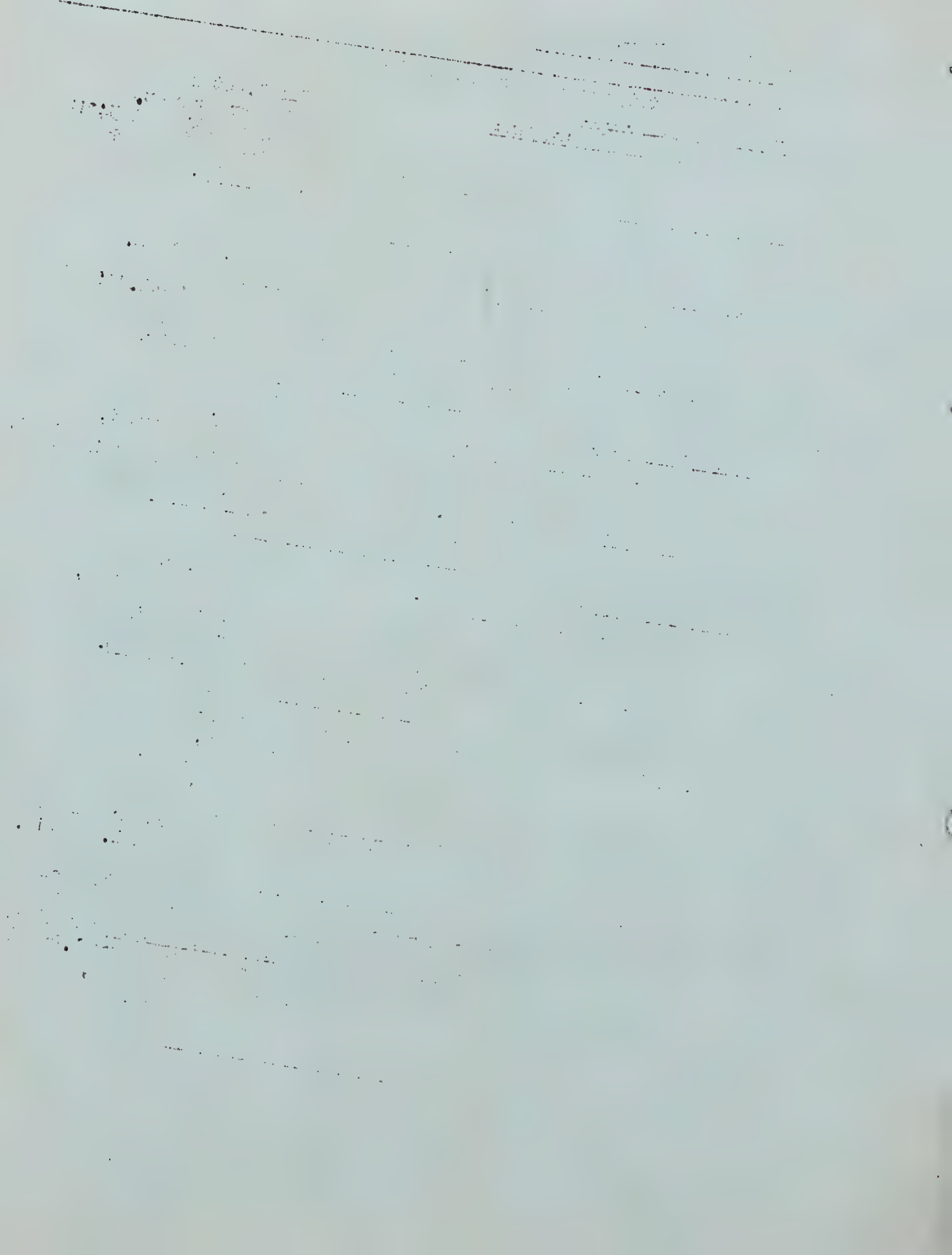
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COMING EVENTS

Traralgon F.N.C.

December

No meeting.

Barbecue to be arranged.

Contact Secretary for details.

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Warragul F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday 21st November

Mr G.R. Briggs will give part 1 of his  
N.W. Australian trip.

This is the last meeting for 1975

Excursion:

Sunday 23rd November

Contact Secretary for details

---

Latrobe Valley F.N.C.

Meeting:

Friday 28th November

Mr Dave King "Insects"

Excursion:

Meeting Place:

Saturday 29th November to Den of Wargun  
Stratford near Avon River picnic area  
at 10.00 am.

End of year outing

Saturday December 6th at Mossvale Park  
Please bring barbecue tea.  
This has been a pleasant day for the past  
years and this year should be likewise.

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SALE EXCURSION TO WIRILDA.

Sunday October 5th was a glorious spring day, one of all too few this season, when Sale Naturalists met at Tyers for a tour of Wirilda under the leadership of Mr Ian McDonald. Pausing up on the plateau for a view over the farm and the flats along the Tyers River, Mr McDonald explained the plans and proposed general layout of the park headquarters.

Several of the cars were left here at the top of the Big Dipper so that the ladies could enjoy the scenery without any driving worries along unfamiliar tracks. Never had Wirilda looked more beautiful, with its rough hills of close packed shining eucalypts, many of them in flower. Several stops were made at points of interest to watch birds and see orchids, while the guide explained the geological features of the area. Dusty Miller, Golden Bushpeas and Pomaderris competed with magenta splashes of Tetratheca by the wayside. We thought we knew Wirilda but this day was a revelation. I know I lost all sense of direction as track succeeded track and new scenes met the eye.

We visited the Scout Camp and the perpendicular limestone cliffs along the river; found Necklace Ferns and Maidenhair along the walking tracks; lunched at the old lime kilns by the fossil cliffs, where the birds followed the Coachwhip Bird and the Yellow-tufted Honey-eaters. Another stop where the river swirled over a low level crossing by a pretty picnic spot and the interest was frogs and snails as well as the birds and flowers. Finally afternoons by the lake, a contrast in orderly man-made beauty but equally appreciated.

Did we then head for home on civilised highways? Not on your life. Our leader drew a deep breath and again plunged into the forest by ways, taking us over view-pointed ridges and through flower beset gullies, until, miraculously, we found ourselves gazing out over the sunlit Latrobe valley and there was the farm and the parked cars. I think that all those present would agree with me, that, thanks to the McDonald boys, this was a wonderful day.

Ellen Lyndon.

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NEST BUILDING MISFORTUNE ...

Walking past (fortunately, not under) a tree at about noon of the day after heavy rain had deprived us of our August L.V.F.N.C. excursion, I saw a mud-lark enter the tree, then heard a heavy 'plop' on the ground beneath.

Investigation showed the latter to have been caused by the fall of fibre-interwoven mud, wet to the point of sloppiness - about a fairly large double handful of it, I judge.

Apparently the fibres binding that partly built nest together had been either not strong enough or not dense enough to withstand the extra wetting before the composition was properly set, as the structure had almost entirely disintegrated either before or as it hit the ground. Looking up, I could not locate the site of the collapsed building operation, so complete had been its fall.

H. Crane.

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THE COOLART EXCURSION

The Traralgon Field Naturalist Club organised an excursion for Sunday 21st September, and invited the Latrobe Valley Club to join them. Arrangements were made to see the Coolart Sanctuary on Mornington Peninsula. A couple of years back we were able to see the movie "The Coolart Story" but to see the area is a different thing. We gladly accepted the invitation from the Traralgon Club and set off in rainy conditions. The Coolart property is situated between Balnarring and Bittern and was not hard to find. An enormous lane of high pines forms the entrance, unfortunately the mass of daffodils had finished flowering, in bloom they must have been a glorious sight.

The property itself consists of a big mansion, built in 1895 by the Merricks brothers. It is surrounded by a beautiful garden. The special attraction is the man made swamp tea-trees and weeping willows all around, this swamp is now a sanctuary and the birds sure make use of the opportunity to have a safe nesting place.

We were welcomed by Mr Bill Davis, who had made the movie about Coolart and was now the leader of this excursion. We walked to the swamp and saw the colony of white ibis, their nests in the trees or on some of the little islands. Some of the nests contained very young ibis, nearly black, one half grown ibis was being fed by one of its parents. There were dusky moorhen, eastern swamp hen and of course the coots, many kinds of ducks and we were glad to have our "birdos" with us, without them we would not have seen half of the species.

Credit to June Lubcke who made up the bird list for the day. We were able to see the Royal Spoonbill in all its glory, the black ducks and chestnut teal. Mr Lyndon spotted the musk duck. The water level was high, the result of heavy rains so our rubber boots did an excellent job. Behind the swamp great flocks of black swans were seen and big groups of straw necked ibis flew overhead. Near the barbed wire fences (and there were several of them...) welcome swallows and fairy martins were darting around. In the tea-trees the grey and also the black and white fantails and blue wrens could be seen, a grey thrush was heard. Walking back to the cars a white egret walked in the paddock, the rain by now had stopped enabling us to have lunch outside the cars. We were fortunate to have a bright sunny afternoon and Mr Davis took us for a stroll through the garden. This is a very well kept garden with enormous lawns, surrounded by large trees in a very natural setting. Many plants were flowering, there were helleborus, hundreds of them, mixed with honesty and aquilegia, a combination I would never have dreamed of but beautiful in this surrounding. A very nice rose garden with large pansies was also included.

We then walked through the paddocks to the nearby beach after crossing a little bridge. In front of us was Westernport Bay with Philip Island in the distance, to the right the beaches of Balnarring and Flinders and to the left French Island, Crib Point refinery near which some large oil tankers were moored. In front of us along the beach was an old jetty, an ideal resting place for the sea birds. Mr Davis told us he had seen here the five species of Cormorants. We could see four only today. The albatross, silver gull and pacific gull were observed as were the black cormorant, the little black cormorant, the black-faced, pied and little pied cormorant (or was it a small edition?..) They just looked like cormorants to me, but that is as far as my knowledge goes: the specialists could identify them all.

THE COOLART EXCURSION.

contd..

We walked along the beach to the Somers holiday camp and here in the trees and bushes were several more birds heard and seen, the brown thornbills, yellow honey-eaters, winged honey-eaters, the little wattle bird and the call of the golden bronzewren cuckoo was heard. Mrs Lyndon spotted the orange winged sitella.

Walking back we again passed the sanctuary now in full afternoon sunlight. A galah was seen and when we add the starlings, house sparrows and golden finches near our parking spot to the already long list we have seen and heard 35 species

I would like to once again thank Mr Davis for his leadership and the Traralgon Club for the opportunity to join in this interesting and educational excursion.

Bart Sterkenburg.

WATER BIRDS NEAR SALE.

We gathered at Lake Guthridge for the start of our excursion on 27th Sept. where we met our leader Mr Guyatt. There were quite a lot of the usual water birds on the lake this morning with the Little Black Cormorants and a Little Egret. -- We eventually got under way after one of our party was "pushed" out of a bog and another taken back to her car for field glasses.

The first stop was down by the caravan park near the Common. Mr Guyatt gave a talk on the history of the common. We lunched here while adding more birds to the list. There was quite a gathering of White Egrets here and Mr Guyatt thought they could be assembling for nesting. Several nests were seen for the day a Brown Thornbill's had babies and a swan was seen with six small grey cygnets. We then moved further down the common where several trees were planted. At this spot some of us planted trees for "Earth Day" 1973 but flood waters made conditions rather damp so we could not reach these.

At this spot one of our party had a "trip" through the fence and ended up flat on her back. She was the only one without gum boots and someone said to her husband, "Why don't you buy your wife gum boots" and he replied "What good are gumboots when she is flat on her back!"

We then proceeded to Dowds Morass and Mr Guyatt spoke about the Morass. Here we saw White fronted Chats, Black-fronted Dotterals, Willie Wagtails, Fairy Martins, Pied and Little Cormorants. Mr Thompson thanked our leader for his guidance during the day and we left him as he was going out in the Morass to the Ibis Rookery to band White Ibis chicks. Miss Galbraith accompanied Mr Guyatt on this boat trip.

The rest of us returned to a patch of heathland to see some of the flowers before returning to Sale.

The Art Gallery was our destination and Mrs Webb kindly opened the Gallery allowing us to view an exhibition of paintings by artists of the Society of Wildlife Artists. This made a very pleasant finish to a nice day with over 50 species of birds being recorded for the day.

Heather Christensen.



THE SALE COMMON STATE GAME REFUGE.

The Sale Common is an area of morass comprising some 308 hectares adjacent to the City of Sale. It was the first State Game Refuge within the State Wildlife Refuges System. This form of Wildlife Reserve is a haven for water birds in the open season.

Intensive management of the Common for waterbird feeding and breeding is improving both the sport of duck shooting, and the waterbird population in general. The Refuge has formed an important link in a chain of waterfowl areas within the Reserve System.

The public are being encouraged to visit the Refuge, adequate parking and viewing facilities will be provided, and defined paths will be made through the area.

Shooting is not permitted on the Refuge because it is within the City limits, and to protect the visiting public and to provide a haven for birds during the open season.

The Refuge is located at the junction of the Latrobe and Thomson Rivers, some 19 kilometres upstream from Lake Wellington, one of the major waters of the Gippsland Lakes. The Reserve is bounded by the South Gippsland Highway on the west, the Latrobe River to the South, and Flooding Creek on the East. It is approximately 210 kilometres east of Melbourne.

HISTORY

In September 1863 an area of 1486 hectares was proclaimed as the Sale Municipal Common, but this Common was abolished in 1880, and replaced by a smaller area of 688 hectares. This was amended further in 1895 and again in 1896 with the result that, from then on, the site now reserved for Wildlife purposes comprised the remaining portion of the original common. This proclaimed Common remained in existence until 1958 when it was revoked with a view to the land being alienated, but this did not proceed.

Briefly, the history of the area is that it was managed as a common by the Sale Council during the periods 1880 - 1895 and 1939 - 1958, and by a body of local citizens during 1895 - 1939. From January 1959, the Sale City Council held an occupancy from the Department of Crown Lands and Survey for the use of the area for grazing agistment.

The area was proclaimed for Wildlife Purposes by an Order-in-Council on 22/9/1964, and the proclamation was gazetted on 30/9/64.

LANDFORM.

The Sale Common is a self contained area of morass bordered by the comparatively high banks of the Latrobe River, Thomson River and Flooding Creek. The northern part is slightly higher than the remainder and its elevation would roughly that of the river banks. Long narrow strips of land extend from the banks into the morass at the various points.

The area has been subjected to several submersions by the sea and the soils are of alluvial origin. The low parts of the morass are made up of heavy clay silts, while the ridges are lighter and more friable.

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THE SALE COMMON STATE GAME REFUGE.

contd..

VEGETATION

Existing species on the Reserve do not necessarily represent the natural vegetation. A long history of overgrazing, burning, and clearing has undoubtedly changed this to some degree. However, the vegetation which is resulting after years without grazing, and from extensive tree planting and other regeneration practices is an attempt to provide ideal waterfowl habitat.

The desired plant communities for the Reserve are:-

- (a) Savannah Woodland - which will occupy most parts of the high morass, River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) Black Wattle (*Acacia melanoxylon*) of varying densities with an understory of native and introduced grasses.
- (b) Tea-tree Scrub - to occupy various areas of low morass which is dry and inundated for varying periods of time. This type of habitat is to be Swamp Paperbark (*Melaleuca ericifolia*), broken up by patches of grass, reeds and open water.
- (c) Reed beds and Open water - to occupy the majority of the lower morass.

The major vegetation program consists of hand planting nursery grown seedlings from locally collected seed, and the regeneration of tree and herbal species due to the termination of grazing.

WATER

The major source of water is from flooding of the Latrobe River as a result of rain and melting snow in the Thomson - Latrobe catchments. These flows occur, on the average, three times every two years usually during the September to December period. Late Autumn-Winter early Spring a series of very high tides cause Lake Wellington to flood back along the Latrobe River and its surrounding morass. This is the less desirable source of water due to relatively high salinity which in time does affect the swamps.

At present water is harvested from the Latrobe River by means of a drop bore and water control structure. This structure allows water to be held on the refuge for extended periods and, alternatively, the dry management of the area from time to time.

Further earthworks are proposed for the near future to provide greater control on water levels. Additional islands are to be constructed at this time.

WILDLIFE

The mammal population on the reserve is restricted to possums and native rats. There is insufficient dry land to support terrestrial animals.

The bird population is dependent upon water conditions, generally it is large and varied (the majority of species are migratory).

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The article about the Sale Common was provided by Mr Guyatt and given to us on our visit there for the excursion.



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REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD OCTOBER 21st. 1975

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The usual large amount of correspondence received was pertaining to conservation matters, magazines in exchange from other clubs. This correspondence is available for members at general meetings.

We were advised that copies of the revised edition of the book Flora of Victoria and Tasmania by the late Norman Wakefield were available from the F.N.C.V.

Other books available were Wildflowers of N.S.W. and a book of paintings by Daisy Wood. Contact the Secretary if you would like any of these books. There is a price reduction for club members.

F.N.C.A. will have a weekend campout Labour Weekend 1976. Further details as they come to us.

Typewriter. We are still obtaining quotes for a suitable machine. This matter will be more fully discussed at the next committee meeting.

Providence Ponds. Mr Cane had written to the club, being very disturbed re the considered burning of this area. We have contacted the Sale Club regarding the proposal. We all agree that reserves should not be burnt.

Submissions. Mrs Thompson reported that she had sent a submission regarding the Environmental Impact of Off Road Vehicles.

All Club submissions are in a separate folder available for members to read.

This issue is the first printed by Mr Ringin, and assisted by several members in assembling, wrapping and posting during the absence of the editor.

Next Committee Meeting will be held at the home of Miss J. Galbraith, Tyers on Tuesday 25th November at 7.30 pm. Interested members welcome at these meetings

Supper Rooster November 28th Mrs Sterkenburg.

Notice of Motion.

Miss Galbraith gave notice that at the annual meeting she will move that the cost of the Naturalist be raised by one dollar.

This rise is due to rising postal, printing and paper costs. The club has absorbed rising costs during 1975 but cannot do the same in 1976.

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OUR BIRD FRIENDS

We have a lazy or clever Kookaburra, depends how you look at it. He sits on the clothes line and waits till the Blackbird has collected a beak full of worms and when the Blackbird puts them down to pull another, the Kookaburra dives and away goes the blackbird leaving a very easy meal for the attacker. This happens almost every morning while both species are feeding young. However one day the Kookaburra tried the same tactics on a Magpie, but the wise old magpie just side-stepped and continued with his work.

If we have caught a mouse we throw it to the Kookaburras from around the corner without being seen and they grab it almost before it lands. To see if they recognised the mouse, we did the same thing one morning with a piece of cold meat. Although they took the meat after a while, it was not attacked as was the mouse. The meat lay on the ground for several minutes before the birds flew down to investigate it.

Bon Thompson.







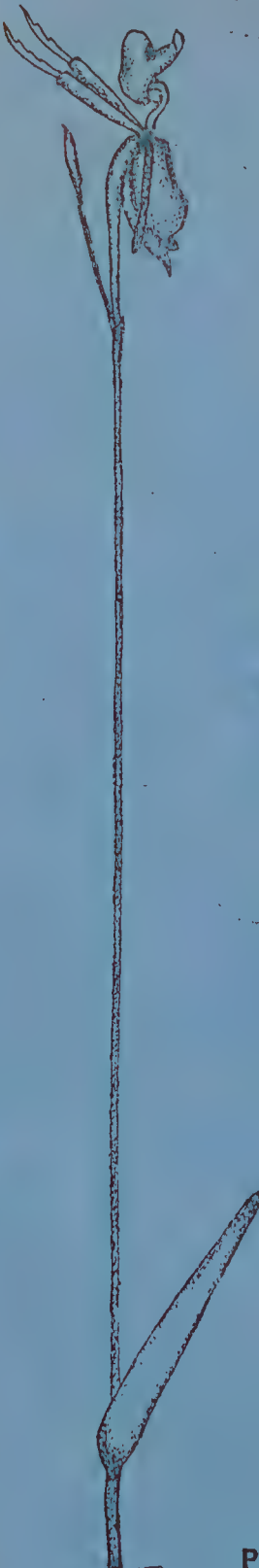






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# *Latrobe Valley Naturalist*

Protect and enjoy

20c.

Registered at the General Post Office Melbourne for transmission by Post as a Periodical Category B.



COMING EVENTS

WARRAGUL F.N.C.

No meeting in December

Friday January 16th 1976 at Millers Factory  
Sutton St. Warragul at 8.00 pm.

Mr Dick Briggs will show part 2 of his trip around West Australia.

Excursion:

Sunday 18th January

Contact Secretary for details

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LATROBE VALLEY F.N.C.

Friday January 16th 1976

Film " The West is a winner "

Excursion Campout:

24th to 26th January 1976 to East Gippsland  
meeting Bairnsdale F.N.C. at a spot where  
Gunmark Road crosses Delegate River.

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BOXING DAY 1975

Lunch at Tyers (Miss Galbraiths Garden)

Bring own lunch and meet members of F.N.C.V.

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A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR READERS.

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### A NEW BUTTERFLY

Anzac Day of this year was sunny perfection in Melbourne, and after watching the March from near the Shrine we went for a stroll in the Botanic Gardens, entering by the highest gate in Domain Road.

I noticed a big black and white butterfly flopping about on the edge of a garden bed, newly emerged that morning after a cold night. It was easy to pick up, for its splendid wings were deformed and it would never fly. It proved to be Polyura pyrrhus sempronius, the Tailed Emperor, a species rarely seen in Southern Victoria - although it has been recorded in the north.

Mr Gooding of Warragul tells me that it is the only representative of its family in Australia, and that the headquarters of the genus is in Africa. P. sempronius is a powerful and high flier and, had it been a perfect specimen, I should never had the pleasure of seeing it, let alone handling it. The larvae feed on Acacia, Cassia, Kurrajong and various exotics, so they should find plenty to interest them in our Botanic Gardens. This butterfly ranges from Northern Australia around the coast to as far south as Sydney, and sometimes well inland. In suitable seasons it may be found further south.

Polyura is distinguished by two "tails" on each hindwing, which also earns it the name of four-tail. The pattern above is bold black and white with a few touches of colour underneath. My specimen was a bright intelligent fellow (sex undetermined), willing and able to drink greedily of syrup from a spoon. It lived in a sunny window nook for over three weeks, trying vainly to fly when full fed. It was supplied with fresh flowers and fermented fruit and other suitable delicacies.

Charles McCubbin gives an amusing sidelight on the habits of this species. He says P. sempronius is attracted to the vicinity of hotels, where they are sometimes run over on the road while sipping from puddles of beer spilled by departing patrons. When next in Sydney I shall try hanging around hotels myself in hopes of waylaying a drunken fourtail!

Ellen Lyndon.

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The F.N.C.V. members will be visiting Gippsland between Christmas and New Year. The Bus will be stopping at Tyers so that all on board may have the opportunity of visiting the garden of Miss Jean Galbraith.

All members of L.V.F.N.C. are invited to join in this gathering on Boxing Day. Bring your own lunch, hot water and cold drinks supplied. Here's hoping we see some of our readers there for lunch and a talk.

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Members may have noticed the absence of Miss Heather Christensen from our recent meetings and excursions. She has very recently undergone surgery in the Traralgon Hospital. She is home again and we look forward to having her company at our gatherings once more. Best Wishes for a speedy recovery Heather from all the members of L.V.F.N.C.

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BIRD WATCHING EXPERIENCES OVERSEAS.

Address by Miss Helen Aston 26/9/75

Miss Aston was overseas from July 1973 to September 1974 as Botanical Liaison Officer for Australia at Kew Gardens. Birds are her major hobby and she spent weekends and holidays bird watching. Although based in London, Miss Aston was able to visit France and Iceland. On her way home 12 days were spent in Kenya where 140 species of birds were observed and identified.

In England time allowed only visits to the southern parts: but a number of special reserves were included.

Bird watching is a very popular activity in England and has many non-government organisations from layman's to the scientific level. The Royal Society for the protection of Birds (RSPB) has a membership of about 1,500,000 and an income of over A \$1,000,000. It is therefore able to employ a large staff and participate in public education, research, law enforcement and the purchase and management of special bird reserves. Much of the income comes from the sale of useful items carrying the RSPB emblem (the Avocet) or pictures of other birds. Its headquarters is an old manor house surrounded by large grounds with native trails winding throughout.

There are 39 County Naturalist Trusts throughout England that carry out conservation activities and projects. Many of these buy and manage special bird or conservation reserves. Many Counties have their own Bird Clubs which bring out large reports on birds in the area. There is an Association of County Trusts a Field Studies Council and the British Trust for Ornithology. The latter is a more scientific organisation which carries out high level scientific projects including the bird mapping scheme which mapped breeding distributions of birds for the whole of the UK in five years. The grids are 10 kilometres square and every species of bird known to have bred in the area was recorded. It is hoped to begin bird mapping in Australia in 1977.

Miss Aston was mainly looking for birds not represented in Australia and the main impressions she received was the migration pattern. In England the southern migrants come in summer but they also get the winter migrants from the north. Miss Aston said winter was a good time for bird watching as that is when the tremendous flocks of hundreds to thousands of birds arrive; these include several species of geese; swans, ducks and thrushes.

The flight habits of birds seemed more pronounced than in Australian birds. Several species have breeding courtship displays in their flight patterns which not only include variations in flight but some are accompanied by distinct sounds. For example the spreading of the tail of the Snipe caused an unusual sound something like a lamb bleating; while the Nightjar brought the wings together above the body to produce a thumping sound. Some flight patterns include a different call note to the birds usual call.

Miss Aston took us through Kew Gardens covering the seasons and the many beautiful birds that visit. Some of the species on the lake are pinioned birds from other countries including some Australian ducks. The wilderness area around Queen's Cottage is an excellent area for birds. The lawn near this area is not mowed while the bluebells are growing and flowering.

BIRD WATCHING EXPERIENCES OVERSEAS

contd...

New Forest near Southampton provided autumn-toned bracken, a Beechwood for rest and a typical English Village with a stream for Dippers, etc. In the spring the cuckoos are heard.

We then visited two special reserves -- Minsmere and Havergate Island. Minsmere has a swampy habitat with broadwalks across swampland to specially constructed hides to enable the birds to be observed without being disturbed. Behind the swampy area is a woodland so the bird list is extensive. Permits are necessary to enter these reserves and they are managed to improve the habitat for the birds or to provide a habitat to attract the birds from surrounding areas to nest in the reserve for their own protection. For example the Little Tern now breeds safely on an area of shingle carted into the Reserve instead of on the nearby beach where its eggs are trodden on by passers by.

Havergate Island is an RSPB project with a visitors' centre and a permanent warden in the breeding season. This reserve was set aside for the Avocets which were very rare but the numbers have expanded and the birds have spread even to other areas.

The Greater Flamingo was one of the attractions on a holiday in the Camargue in Southern France. Whinchats, Pied Flycatchers, Bitterns and Stone Curlews were among the species shown.

In Iceland with its volcanoes, fiords, tundra, permanent ice-caps, cleared land for sheep and steep cliffs, many species of birds such as fulmars, gulls, terns, razor bills, phalaropes and harlequin duck were photographed. Miss Aston said the birds here were very tame and the slides showed the beautiful colouring of the birds of this area.

Many members present who had lived or visited Europe were pleased to see again the bird species illustrated while those of us who have not had the opportunity to travel overseas were delighted to see and hear about the birds we have read about. It was a most enjoyable evening for everyone.

Bon Thompson.

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INLAND TRIP IN AUSTRALIA

Address by Mr E. Errey 24/10/75

Mr Errey of the Geelong Field Naturalist Club was on a tour of Central and Western Australia for 3 months in 1974. Dr and Mrs Willis, Mr and Mrs Cliff Beaughole, 3 members of the Geelong F.N.C. and a gentleman from Hamilton who was interested in Aboriginal paintings, artifacts, sacred grounds and reserves completed the group. There were 3 vehicles and a portion of the luggage was the material and presses necessary to press the specimens collected.

The slides for the evening were divided into 4 sections :- Central Australia in the vicinity of Alice Springs; Northern Australia including the Kimberleys and Marble Bar; Hammersley Ranges; and the S.W. of Western Australia. The Photography was excellent showing Mr Errey is no amateur with the camera. Neither were the slides confined to flowers, the scenes were delightful and reptiles and insects were also included. The bird and animal tracks in the sand of the Finke River told their own story.

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INLAND TRIP IN AUSTRALIA

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Because t here had been much rain before the party set out, Lake Hart was a great sheet o f water rather than the usual dry expanse of sand. Other water ways were also carrying water. The Scarlet Grevillea wickhamii and Hakea multilinata were in full glory. Many gorges, chasms and mo untains were visited, explored and climbed ... Standley Chasm with the Ghost Gums, Serpentine Gorge with its lovely clear pool, Mt Sonder with beautiful colouring and geological formations, Ormiston Gorge with Acacia doratoxylon that looked more like a Weeping willow, and the yellow Euc. pachyloma, were all visited. Mt Connor with its precipitous drop on three sides but with very interesting plants on its rather rugged "flat" top was very interesting. The red colour of the soil made a beautiful background for the many flowers photographed. The views from the mountains were like aerial photos.

The party then returned to the bitumen road and north to Napier Range which was originally a coral reef under the sea. Many examples of the coral debris in conglomerate rock formed very interesting patterns. A pleasant time was spent in a boat on the water of Geeki Gorge. Leonard Gorge in the King Leopold Ranges showed examples of the contorted strata and provided many botanical specimens, including Pushtails and Boerhaavia.

Marble Bar is a bar across the stream but the rock is jasper, both red and white, which has a marbled effect. Behind the bar is a large pool.

In the Hammersley Range termite mounds 12 ft (3.6 metres) high were fascinating shapes which looked as if they had been sculptured. In this area many of the plants were grey or whitish due to a protective covering. There were acacias, cassias, solanum and others. The 700-800 ft. (210 -240m) gorges in the ironstone were very precipitous. Here there was some Sturt's Desert Pea although it was really too early for it to be flowering well. Yellow Hibiscus vitifolius with deep mauve centres, many eremophilas and beautiful scholtzias were all in bloom and very picturesque. The Brachysema chambersii had the white spindly foliage above with a wreath of red flowers around the base. Velleia rosea with its rose and white flowers formed quite a carpet and the deep purple goodenia was very different from the yellow species we find locally.

In the south-west the mauve calytrix, red dryandra with flowers right on the ground, white hakeas, isopogons, eucalypts, Salmon Gum, dodoneas, and velli as were all very colourful. There was a boronia which was a rather straggly bush on sandy terrain with apparently no flowers; but the secret was that the delicate green flowers grew under the sand and had to be disturbed and propped up to be photographed. There was also a beautiful blue Boronia busselliana (2)

Mr Errey summed up the evening by showing a few slides of the outstanding features and flowers of the whole trip.

Bon Thompson.



ORCHIDS AT WON WRON

On Saturday 25th October we drove to Won Wron where we were met by Mr and Mrs Lyndon our excursion leaders for the day. As well as "seeing all the usual things" that normally grow in a coastal environment, we were particularly interested in the discussion about *Caladenia alba* and *C. carnea*. Some of the pink flowers were *C. alba*, some were even white with a pink edge just to confuse matters.

On consulting W.H. Nicholls it appears "that *C. alba* usually has solitary flowers, pure white to pink" but neither the labellum or column are barred in red lines as in *C. carnea*, that is to say -- the column of *C. alba* is whitish or green.

Just to confuse matters *C. angustata*, the musky *Caladenia* appeared several times, naturally, the musky perfume is an easy means of identifying it, but beware, as several forms of *C. carnea* also diffuse a strong musk-like scent particularly at night.

The forest appeared to suffer from frequent burning in places, but it made the searching for orchids etc easier.

Our leader found some interesting orange capped cordyceps, so we spent some time digging like bandicoots trying to find the complete caterpillar fungus.

According to Victorian Toadstools and Mushrooms by Dr J.H. Willis "Caterpillars, beetles, wasps, ants, flies and even bugs are among the recorded hosts".

The highlight of my day was the appearance of *Lycopanthus suaveolens*, brown beaks, although widespread are not generally common. At one stage we thought it would be necessary to swim for it, but we sedately retraced our steps when some bikies plunged into the water over our road.

It was interesting to visit Mr Kents' sanctuary where he is providing a natural habitat for many of our feathered friends. He is to be congratulated on his efforts, particularly when the trigger happy shooters and other four legged pests do their best to destroy our diminishing wild life.

Nancy Brooks.

BOOK REVIEWEMBEDDING INSECTS AND OTHER SPECIMENS IN CLEAR PLASTIC. BY M.S. MOULDS

This publication of 25 pages will be useful to people wishing to keep specimens in plastic. In the introduction the author says: 'The process described here enables specimens to be embedded in clear plastic blocks, thus allowing for good visibility, even with the use of a microscope, while the specimen is protected from damage.'

There are sections for Materials, Methods, and preparation of specimens. Many illustrations are helpful for a beginner to follow.

An Appendix listing special techniques for different types of specimens from dry specimens, slugs, shells, green plants and flowers to name a few.

This publication will be invaluable for anyone wishing to develop this process. The book is available from Australian Entomological Press, 14 Chisholm St.

Greenwich 2065. N.S.W.

Price is \$2.00 plus 30 cents postage.

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REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 25th NOVEMBER 1975.

Programme 1976 The Secretary reported that we had secured all of the suggested speakers for the year. The printed programme should be available early in the new year.

Correspondence, We accepted the usual large amount of magazines, pamphlets on conservation matters. These are available for members perusal at all times, they are tabled at General Meetings.

The meeting was then addressed by Mr Proudfoot of Traralgon who was concerned about the activities of Roseneath Village Pty Ltd. This company plans a development near Hollands Landing on the Gippsland Lakes.

As the Club wished to send a submission to the Town and Country Planning Board we have obtained form of Statement of Objections to grant Permit.

Several members have also indicated their concern for the development.

A public meeting held in Stratford on Wednesday 26th November was attended by 5 members of the Committee

Camp out January 1976

Mr Barton from Bairnsdale F.N.C. has advised us of the arrangements for the week end. The Camping spot will be where the Gunmark Road crosses the Delegate River, where there is a hut. It is a good flat right on the river with peppermints and snow gums, not far from Bendoc.

This spot is within easy reach of Mt Ellery, also many other spots of beauty and interest are very accessible. McKillop's Bridge, the Gap Road, the Yalmy area, Delegate Hill, the Goomerah Range, Erminundra.

There seem to be fears that Mt Ellery is difficult, there is no great distance to walk to the foot of the great boulders on a cut jeep track and the track to the actual summit will be cleared. There is a magnificent view from the top, to Kosciusko and Cape Howe, all the Gelantipy country etc.

The vegetation is quite different from the West and North Gippsland Ranges and there should be plenty of flowers at the 4,500 ft (1371 metres) mark.

Mr Ian Smith District Superintendent of the N.P.S. will lead the excursion.

The Road will be through Orbost along the Bonang Highway and watch for signs. Any other information will be published in January issue of L.V.Naturalist.

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The next Committee Meeting of L.V.F.N.C. will be Tuesday January 13th at the home of Mr and Mrs McElroy 35 Latrobe Road Morwell at 7.30 pm.  
All members welcome to attend any committee meetings.

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Members of L.V.F.N.V. and Warragul F.N.C. will be sorry to learn of the death of our Member Mr Perc Rozyński of Warragul on Friday 21st November.  
He was a very keen naturalist and a good bushman.  
Our deepest sympathy to his wife and family.

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# LATROBE VALLEY NATURALIST

DETAILS OF CONTRIBUTING CLUBS ARE AS FOLLOWS :

	<u>HON. SECRETARY</u>	<u>MEETINGS</u>
LATROBE VALLEY F.N.C.	Mrs. I. Peterson 14 Barry Street MORWELL 3840 Tel. 34 2129	7.30 p.m. on 4th Friday of each month, Yallourn State School, Yallourn
SALE F.N.C.	Mr. N. Williams 8 Antares Avenue SALE 3850 Tel. 44 1824	8.00 p.m. on 1st Friday of each month, C.W.A. Rooms, Macarthur Street, Sale.
TRARALGON F.N.C.	Mr. J. Wall 156 Kay Street TRARALGON 3844 Tel. 74 1948	8.00 p.m. on 1st Friday of each month, City Council Reception Rooms, Traralgon
WARRAGUL F.N.C.	Mr. J. Brooks 3 Nobel Street WARRAGUL 3820 Tel. 2 1563	8.00 p.m. on 3rd Friday of each month, Albert Street State School, Warragul

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

*Due March 1st, payable to Hon. Treasurer :*

Mrs. E. Lubeke	NATURALIST	\$2.50
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## LATROBE VALLEY NATURALIST

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Hon. Editor  
Mrs. I. Padfield  
99 Chamberlain Road  
NEWBOROUGH 3828















